WERNER'S
READINGS AND RECITATIONS
No. 34

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WERNER'S READINGS AND RECITATIONS

No. 34

Stories

COMPILED AND ARRANGED BY

ELISE WEST

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Werner's Readings and Recitations

No. 34.

PRICE OF THE PAST PARTICIPLE.

MARGARET CAMERON.

PRENTISS FORD was a noteworthy young man, predestined to a successful career, but there came a morning when he found himself face to face with a problem for which he could find no solution. The following day would be his wife's birthday, and his habitual readiness had given way before his masculine uncertainty as to what gift would meet with her approval.

He lived in the suburbs, and on this particular morning, as he joined his wife at the window to read, over her shoulder, the headlines of the morning paper before starting for the train, he exclaimed, "Hello! Mayhew's gotten his berth."

Prentiss was given, in moments of excitement, to the use of the obsolescent past participle.

"Who's Mayhew?" Stella asked.

"Billy Mayhew, otherwise William B. See, he's been appointed consul at San Salvador. Capital attorney. Handles all John S. Babcock's business. I wonder who'll get it now?"

"Would you like to have it?"

"Like it! My dear girl, that business is worth at least five thousand a year, aside from the prestige it gives. Would I like it!"

"Well, why don't you get it?"

Ford glanced at her with amusement.

"You are young, of course, but Mr. Babcock might go farther and fare worse!"

"Good-by, dear," he laughed.

She followed him into the hall. "I called on Miss Mowbray yesterday."

"Who's she?"

"Mrs. Babcock's niece visiting them. We must do something for her. A dinner party, or something."

"Yes," he absently assented, "that would be a good idea."

John S. Babcock was the custodian of sundry large funds, so that his legal business was not a matter to be lightly awarded, and on the way to the station Ford's mind was full of queries concerning the remote probability of his obtaining at least a share of it, and he temporarily forgot about Stella's birthday gift.

On the train a man with whom Ford usually sat on the way to town complained, "They've changed the bill at the opera to-night. Somebody's unable to sing, and they're going to put on 'Lohengrin!'"

"Well?" said Prentiss.

"Well, I've got tickets, but I'll be hanged if I want to hear 'Lohengrin!' German opera's one too many for me!"

"How many tickets have you?"

"Two, in the parquet."

"Do you want to dispose of them?"

"Sure! Do you want them?"

"Yes, I'll take them," said Ford. He paid fourteen dollars, and slipped the tickets into his pocket with a sigh of relief. Stella was a lover of music, and devoted to Wagner. He remembered that there was a book on the Wagnerian operas which she had once expressed a desire to own. He would get that as a permanent souvenir of the evening, and this arrangement, with a nice little supper, would certainly do very well.

As he was leaving the train he met John S. Babcock.

"No, his defalcation didn't surprise me," Mr. Babcock was saying to some one behind him. "Look at the reckless way in which that man spent money! I have found it an excellent plan to judge of a man's value to me by the way in which he takes his pleasures."

When he reached the office, Prentiss found a client awaiting him, and entered at once upon important business. It became evident that Ford would be obliged to give his entire day to the matter, and he resolved to telegraph to Stella that he would not dine at home, and ask her to meet him in town in time for the opera. He pulled a tablet toward him and wrote hurriedly:

"Mrs. Prentiss Ford, Riverbank:
"Have gotten tickets for 'Lohengrin'. Bring dress-suit.
"PRENTISS FORD."

Early in the afternoon, while he was still very busy, a telegram was brought to him:

"Thanks have asked babcocks miss mowbray galvins tallants and pomeroy.
"STELLA."

He read the message twice uncomprehendingly. Then he remembered the dinner party that Stella was planning for Miss Mowbray. Probably these were the guests. But why wire him? And why thanks? Oh, the opera seats, of course! Stella was punctilious about acknowledging an invitation, and it was one of her delicious feminine economies never to send a telegram of less than ten words.

His client was obliged to take a train at half-past four, and Ford accompanied him to the station.

He bought the book for his wife; and, shortly before six o'clock, as he returned to the office-building, he noticed a woman who approached from the opposite direction, carrying a suit-case. It was Stella.

"Are you just getting back?" she asked. "We telephoned about half-past four, and the boy said that you had gone out, but that he expected you back soon."

"We?" he queried.

"Mrs. Babcock and I. We are invited to dine with them at the University Club."

As they entered the office, Stella tucked her hand into his.

"It was so dear of you to plan this, Prentiss! It's my birthday party, isn't it?"

"Yes," he said tenderly. "Do you like it?"

"Better than anything. But you're very extravagant, aren't you?"

"Not a bit! Business is looking up, and we can afford to be a little indulgent to ourselves—particularly on your birthday."

Stella sighed with content.

"Then I'm quite happy. The dinner with the Babcocks will be delightful, and the others are to meet us at the opera-house."

"Eh? What others?"

"Why, didn't you get my message? I wired you that I had invited the Babcocks and Miss Mowbray, the Galvins, the Tallants, and Ogden Pomeroy. It was so clever of you to find a way!"

"A way?"

"Yes—to interest Mr. Babcock. You know how he loves German opera!"

"But I didn't ask Mr. Babcock!"

"No, but you knew I would! You left it for me! And of course—" she dimpled with satisfaction—"we wouldn't give a theatre party—without asking the Babcocks!"

"Stella, how did I word that message?" He spoke very quietly. "Do you remember?"

She laughed. "Indeed I do! 'Mrs. Prentiss Ford, Riverbank. Have got ten tickets for 'Lohengrin.' Bring dress-suit. Prentiss Ford.'"

Ford recognized his enemy, the past participle. He did some rapid thinking. It was twenty minutes after six. Every man in the building had gone at that hour. He had about eleven dollars in his pocket. Eight additional opera seats would cost fifty-six dollars.

"Prentiss, dear, you must hurry," urged his wife.

"I'm sorry, sweetheart, I can't go to dinner with you, I have something on hand that must be done."

"To-night?"

"To-night—within two hours."

"But, Mr. Babcock."

"I know, but it's quite impossible for me to go. I had planned to spend the time before you arrived at work, and I simply cannot neglect this matter."

"Oh, well—perhaps it will give him a better impression if you are too busy to accept even his invitation."

He called a cab and sent Stella to the dinner. It was twenty-five minutes before seven. He went to the 'phone and called up the opera-house.

"Can you give me ten seats in a block?"

"No, sir. I can give you two adjoining boxes—five seats in each. The only ones left."

"How much?"

"Forty-five dollars each."

"All right. Will you reserve them for me until I can get down there?"

"Well—how long will that be?"

"Oh, half an hour or more."

"Yes, sir; that'll be all right."

Ford flung up the receiver. He took the money from his pockets and found he had eleven dollars and sixty-five cents. The opera tickets he had bought in the morning would bring his cash capital up to twenty-five dollars. This left sixty-five he must obtain in some way.

Then it occurred to him that a supper must follow the opera. That would require at least twenty—possibly thirty—dollars more. Ninety-five in all that he had still to get.

Suddenly he remembered Mr. Babcock's words: "I have found it an excellent plan to judge a man's value to me by the way in which he takes his pleasures. If he's extravagant, I won't have him."

"There goes my last and only chance," he said grimly to himself.

He remembered a lawyer who lived in town who might have the money within reach, and a moment later he was saying over the 'phone:

"Robbins, can you put your hands on seventy-five or eighty dollars within half an hour?"

"My dear fellow, I'm awfully sorry," Robbins answered, "but I've just loaned my last dollar to my nephew. Haven't you anything you can pawn?"

"I'll see," said Ford, "Good-by."

It was five minutes 'past seven. He remembered a pawnshop near the opera-house.

He hailed a passing cab, seized his suit-case and told the man to "drive like the devil" to the pawnshop. As he left the cab it was fifteen minutes past seven.

He found a telephone and called up the opera-house. "This is Prentiss Ford. I am on my way down but have been detained. Will you hold those boxes for me until half-past seven?"

"You'll surely take them, sir?"

"Oh, yes. I am on my way down town now."

"Very well, sir."

Prentiss hung up the 'phone and went to the pawnshop. "What will you give me for the suit I have on?" he asked. "It's new."

The man fingered the coat. "Sixteen dollars."

"And my watch?"

"Twenty-five dollars."

He opened his suit-case, and took the pearl studs from his dress-shirt.

"Twenty dollars," said the Jew.

"How much are those," asked Ford, indicating some imitation pearl studs in the window.

"Seventy-five cents."

"I'll take those and you may have these. How much for my shoes?"

"Two dollars."

"Very well. Have you a place where I can change my clothes?" He quickly dressed, packing his business suit in the suit-case.

"How much for the case?" he asked.

"Three dollars."

"All right. The clothes are packed in it, and here's the watch. Hurry up!"

The old Jew deliberately counted out sixty-six dollars, and gave Ford the customary tickets for the redemption of the goods.

As Prentiss was leaving the opera-house, after having secured the seats, he heard some one call.

"Hello, Ford!"

Turning, he saw Ogden Pomeroy.

"What are you doing down here all alone?" asked Pomeroy. "And where's Stella?"

"Stella is dining with the Babcocks," replied Prentiss, "I was busy and couldn't go."

"Business must be rushing with you. Where are you going now?"

"I'm looking for a man."

"Won't I do?" asked Pomeroy. "Have a cigar?"

"No, thanks, I'm in a deuce of a hurry."

"Can I be of any assistance?"

"Why–er–no," began Ford.

"I'm at your service," said Ogden.

"Well, to tell the truth, I'm somewhat short of money. I have been unexpectedly called upon for a large amount of money, and it has left me without enough to pay for the supper I want to give after the opera. If you happen to have twenty or thirty dollars about you—"

Pomeroy groaned, and putting his hand in his pocket, brought out a handful of small change.

Ford looked his disappointment.

Pomeroy suddenly conceived an idea that he felt to be brilliantly original. "Why don't you pawn something?" he asked.

"Man," said Prentiss, "I've pawned the clothes off my back, the shoes off my feet, and the jewels out of my shirt front!"

Then the whole story came out, interrupted by shouts of laughter from Pomeroy.

"Here," he cried. "Come on! I have my watch. We'll pawn that. Certainly we will. It's the least I can do for you!"

Ogden's watch brought seventeen dollars and a half; but, by adding his fob and a quaint and valuable ring, they obtained a sum that they felt would be sufficient.

When the rest of the party arrived at the opera-house they found their host and Pomeroy unconcernedly smoking and chatting near the entrance, and Ford received the greetings of his guests as calmly as if this entertainment had been entirely of his planning, while Stella was exquisitely radiant.

After they were seated in the boxes, Mr. Babcock said to his wife. "Prentiss Ford is a noteworthy young man. He has always lived

well within his income, and he must be meeting with remarkable success to be able to give an entertainment like this."

But it was not until the next day that Prentiss fully realized what his past participle had done for him. Then it was that John S. Babcock came into his office and said:

"Mr. Ford, my attorney, Mr. Mayhew, has been called away, and I am without a legal adviser. Do you think you could find time to help me out?"

Prentiss thought he could.

A LIFE-LESSON.

JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY.

THERE! little girl, don't cry!
They have broken your doll, I know;
And your tea-set blue,
And your playhouse, too,
Are things of long ago;
But childish troubles will soon pass by:
There! little girl, don't cry!

There! little girl, don't cry!
They have broken your slate, I know;
And the glad, wild ways
Of your schoolgirl days
Are things of long ago;
But life and love will soon come by:
There! little girl, don't cry!

There! little girl, don't cry!
They have broken your heart, I know;
And the rainbow gleams
Of your youthful dreams
Are things of long ago;
But heaven holds all for which you sigh:
There! little girl, don't cry!

THE BOY THAT WAS SCARET O' DYIN'.

ANNIE TRUMBULL SLOSSON.

ONCE there was a boy that was dreadful scaret o' dyin'. Some folks is that way, you know; they ain't never done it to know how it feels, and they're scaret. And this boy was that way. He wa'n't very rugged, his health was sort o' slim, and mebbe that made him think about sech things more. 'T any rate, he was terr'ble scaret o' dyin'. 'Twas a long time ago, this was,—the times when posies and creatures could talk so's folks could know what they was sayin'.

And one day, as this boy, his name was Reuben—I forget his other name—as Reuben was settin' under a tree, an ellum tree, cryin' he heard a little, little bit of a voice—not squeaky you know, but small and thin and soft like—and he see 'twas a posy talkin'.

'Twas one o' them posies they call Benjamins, with three-cornered whitey blowths, with a mite o' pink on 'em, and it talked in a kind o' pinky-white voice, and it says:

"What you cryin' for, Reuben?"

And he says: "Cause I'm scaret o' dyin'" says he, "I'm dreadful scaret o' dyin'."

Well, what do you think? That posy jest laughed—the most cur'us little pinky-white laugh 'twas—and it says, the Benjamin says: "Dyin'! Scaret o' dyin'? Why, I die myself every single year o' my life."

"Die yourself," says Reuben. "You're foolin'; you're alive this minute."

"Course I be," says the Benjamin. "But that's neither here nor there,—I've died every year sence I can remember."

"Don't it hurt?" says the boy.

"No, it don't," says the posy; "it's real nice. You see, you get kind o' tired a-holdin' up your head straight and lookin' peart and wide-awake, and tired o' the sun shinin' so hot, and the winds blowin' you to pieces, and the bees a-takin' your honey. So it's nice to feel sleepy and kind o' hang your head down, and get sleepier and sleepier, and then find you're droppin' off. Then you wake up jest the nicest time o' year, and come up and look 'round, and—why, I like to die, I do."

But someways that didn't help Reuben much as you'd think.

"I ain't a posy," he thinks to himself, "and mebbe I wouldn't come up."

Well, another time he was settin' on a stone in the lower pastur', cryin' again, and he heerd another cur'us little voice. 'Tw'n't like the posies' voice, but 'twas a little, woolly, soft, fuzzy voice, and he see 'twas a caterpillar a-talkin' to him. And the caterpillar says, in his fuzzy, little voice, he says: "What you cryin' for, Reuben?

And the boy, he says: "I'm powerful scaret o' dyin', that's why," he says. And that fuzzy caterpillar he laughed.

"Dyin'!" he says, "I'm lottin' on dyin' myself. All my family," he says, "die every once in awhile, and when they wake up they're jest splendid,—got wings, and fly about, and live on honey and things. Why, I wouldn't miss it for anything!" he says. "I'm lottin' on it."

But somehow that didn't chirk up Reuben much. "I ain't a caterpillar," he says, "and mebbe I wouldn't wake up at all."

Well, there was lots o' other things talked to that boy, and tried to help him,—trees and posies and grass and crawlin' things, that was allers a-dyin' and livin', and livin' and dyin'.

Reuben thought it didn't help him any, but I guess it did a little mite, for he couldn't help thinkin' o' what they every one on' em said. But he was scaret all the same. And one summer he begun to fail up faster and faster, and he got so tired he couldn't hardly hold his head up, but he was scaret all the same.

And one day he was layin' on the bed, and lookin' out o' the east winder, and the sun kep' a-shinin' in his eyes till he shet 'em up, and he fell asleep. He had a real good nap and when he woke up he went out to take a walk.

And he begun to think o' what the posies and trees and creatures had said about dyin' and how they laughed at his bein' scaret at it, and he says to himself, "Why, someways I don't feel so scaret to-day, but I s'pose I be." And jest then what do you think he done? Why, he met a Angel. He'd never seed one afore, but he knowed it right off. And the Angel says, "Ain't you happy, little boy?"

And Reuben says, "Well, I would be, only I'm so dreadful scaret o' dyin'. It must be ter'ble cur'us," he says, "to be dead."

And the Angel says, "Why, you be dead." And he was.

KISSES OF MARJORIE.

BOOTH TARKINGTON.

PRINCIPAL CHARACTERS:

CAPTAIN WILLIAM LAWRENCE, an aid-de-camp of Light Horse Harry Lee.

MAJOR MCMURDY, of His British Majesty's Foot.

ENSIGN GAY, of the same.

MISS MARJORIE LANSING.

MRS. MELLOWES.

TIME: The first of June, 1778. PLACE: Philadelphia.

SCENE: MRS. MELLOWES'S rose-garden. Through windows of house ladies and gentlemen and officers in red, with gleaming epaulettes, may be seen passing and repassing in the gallant dance.

Enter, from house, MISS MARJORIE LANSING and CAPTAIN WILLIAM LAWRENCE, immediately followed by MAJOR MCMURDY and ENSIGN GAY, who stand near window and observe them. MARJORIE is first to speak.

MARJORIE. 'Tis beautiful to escape to the open. How insufferable the heat of the candles within!

LAWRENCE. Smell these roses, Marj—Madame.

MAR. They are our first to bloom, sir. [*Aside.*] I am mad with fear. Those two have followed us out.

LAW. [*bowing*]. They bloomed but to-day, knowing that to-night Miss Lansing might cast a glance upon them. Happy flowers, Madame! [*Aside to her.*] That red-faced Major has not once taken his eyes off me since first he spied me in the crowd.

MAR. [*tremulously aside to* LAWRENCE]. Sh'! Be quiet, Will. What name do you use? Quick! [*He has no opportunity to answer, for the two officers are already at his elbow.*]

MAJOR [*bowing*]. Ah, Miss Lansing is botanically inclined this evening?

MAR. This gentleman is a botanist.

MAJ. May we have the honor to be made acquainted with the gentleman?

MAR. La! I thought all the gentlemen knew one another. Mr. Faversham, here are Major McMurdy and Mr. Gay, of His Majesty's most martial, whom I present to you. May I have the pleasure, gentlemen?

GAY [*aside to* MAJOR]. I was presented to him within, by our hostess, Mrs. Mellowes, and I was clear his name was Henderson, not Faversham.

MAJ. [*whispering*]. Sh', Child, easy! [*Aloud.*] We have not had the pleasure to see Mr. Faversham in Philadelphia before, I think?

MAR. [*hastily*]. Mr. Faversham is a recluse, I fear, burying himself in the country with his books and praying that the war may be soon over, so that his botanical specimens may not fall in the fields, under the heels of marching troops—quite disaffected, I assure you, sirs—a true Tory.

GAY [*aside to the* MAJOR]. Buried with his books—and that carriage, and those shoulders! A new botanist, surely!

MAJ. [*aside to him*]. Easy, Lad. [*To* LAWRENCE.] You have seen none of the fighting, sir?

LAW. Oh, yes, a little.

MAR. [*laughing nervously*]. From the windows of his study.

[*The music indoors ceases, the minuet being ended, a number of ladies and gentlemen come into garden.* MARJORIE *and* LAWRENCE *manage to step into a little rose-arbor some distance from the* MAJOR *and* GAY.]

MAR. Please don't look so grand and soldierly, Will. Try to stoop a little and look more careworn, and learned, and timid—try, dear.

MAJ. [*as they approach*]. Ah, my dear Mr. Faversham, I am sorry to trouble you, but Captain Halleck here and I have a bet upon the scientific name for a rose. We can do no better than to leave it to so distinguished a botanist as yourself.

MAR. [*sharply*]. What, sir! You dare to speak of a bet in my presence? You, Major McMurdy, of all men, knowing my aversion to wagers and—

MAJ. Faith, no! I never heard of it.

MAR. 'Tis a wicked, evil practice. Mr. Faversham, if you answer

this question, I withdraw my acquaintance—I'll never speak to you again.

LAW. [*bowing*]. Your word, Madame, is my law. Gentlemen, I am sorry to refuse to settle your difference, but you see— [*A servant approaches with a note in his hand.*]

SERVANT [*to* ENSIGN GAY]. May I ask, sir, which gentleman is Mr. Henderson?

GAY [*loudly*]. A note for Mr. Henderson? I think there is no one here of that name.

LAW. Under your favor, sir, it is for me.

MAJ. [*triumphantly*]. Under yours, sir, have I caught your name wrong? I understand you to be called Faversham.

LAW. Quite right.

GAY. There seems to be a discrepancy—under your botanical favor, sir.

MAR. Not at all. Mr. Henderson's well-known Botany was printed under the name of "Faversham." I presented him to you two gentlemen by his nom de plume—that is all. So! [*She walks aside with* LAWRENCE.]

MAJ. So! The man is a rebel officer of dragoons. He burst out of a fog right over me when we were at close quarters at Germantown and near rode me down. I was almost certain of him as soon as I saw him to-night.

GAY. We need a spy or two—for the example.

MAJ. Yes, but I want to know what he is to Marjorie Lansing that she mixes in the business so.

GAY [*slyly*]. A fine woman, Major!

MAJ. Ha, boy, but she is! The tap of her little heels in the ballroom is intoxicating music, and the air about her is delicious perfume, while her breath is like the smell of moonlight in May. The more reason, then—

GAY [*smiling*]. For the rebel dragoons to lose an officer?

MAJ. True. Faith, we'll condole her mourning. [MARJORIE *and* LAWRENCE *go slowly toward the back garden.*]

MAR. Ah, why did you come? Those two suspect.

LAW. They know. I think they'll arrest me presently.

MAR. They shall not!

LAW. If I can gain the back garden gate unobserved I am safe. This letter lets me know the horse is there. Let us see if they follow us. 'Tis no use, I fear, Marjorie. If we walk further this way they will interfere. See! As we stop, they stop. Cat and mouse it seems to be. Ah, my Marjorie!

MAR. [*pretending to show a flower for* LAWRENCE'S *inspection*]. No, don't take my hand, dear: they're talking with Dorothy Mellowes, but watching us sharply. You must go.

LAW. How can I? I haven't seen you for seven months. I was dead for the sight of you, and now I'm dying to continue to see you.

MAR. You to enter the British lines with a forged passport!

LAW. Which will take me out again.

MAR. You to do this! To come and meet and talk to British officers, when you are the simplest, and most easily penetrated person alive! You do not understand the rudiments of lying! You must leave that to me.

LAW. [*laughing*]. Thou deceiver! Why, Marjorie, you just now called me "Faversham" to those men: ten minutes before that Mrs. Mellowes introduced me to one of them as "Henderson."

MAR. Ah, mercy! Will, if I have undone you—

LAW. They'll not think of it again.

MAR. If they do, promise to let me answer. And oh! when that villain—with his sardonic smile of suspicion—asked you if you had seen any fighting, you threw back your shoulders, for all this world like the great, wild dragoon that you are, and said jauntily: "Oh, yes, a little!" A pretty botanist! It was madness. Ah! why did you come?

LAW. Because I would as soon have died as to go longer without seeing you. So I threw off my trooper's coat, rode but a dozen miles and was by your side, for which Sophia Mellowes is a good cousin to me. And I have news for our General. Marjorie, Clinton is going to evacuate. Within a fortnight Washington will hold Philadelphia.

MAR. What is that to me if you are taken to-night?

LAW. 'Tis everything to me that I am here now. Think of it, sweetheart: the last time I saw you was the first time that I knew you loved me. Why, the very remembrance takes away my breath and leaves

me stunned with happiness and astonishment almost as I was that day.

MAR. Oh, if you were but as good a botanist as you are a lover. I wish you could give Major McMurdy a few lessons, Will; he's a most execrably bad hand at love-making.

LAW. Does he dare—

MAR. Constantly; but you may safely praise him for it; he is such a contrast, and he makes women appreciate a lover like you; he is so stout and red and—

LAW. And he keeps his confounded eyes this way. If ever we come to hand with his regiment I swear I'll kill him twice over!

MAR. 'Tis true: he talks with Captain Halleck and nods his head this way. It shakes my heart with fright. You must go, dear—you must!

LAW. I cannot yet. There is to be a fresh horse brought up for me. I shall know by a note where he is to be, and I have no word. Once on his back with a hundred yards clear start and I am as good as in General Washington's own bivouac.

MAR. Look! [*Frightened.*] He is in the center of a group of king's officers. They are hatching something; they have their heads together. You can tell it by the look of them. [*Trembling.*] He is calling.

LAW. Let us step out to meet them.

MAR. That wretch shall pay for this!

LAW. Faith, sweetheart, 'tis only what I should do in the same position. If it were only those two, I'd fly for it straight, but the place is fair solid with British officers, and a word from these will bring a pack of them on me.

[*Music sounds within; ladies and gentlemen begin to enter the house.* MRS. MELLOWES, *making a round of the garden on the arm of an officer, sees* LAWRENCE.]

MRS. MELLOWES. Why is he not gone?

MAR. Get Mr. Gay in the house. [MRS. MELLOWES *excuses her escort and joins* GAY *and the* MAJOR.]

MRS. M. Mr. Gay, why are you not indoors? Are you not promised to some lady for this minuet?

MAJ. [*whispering*]. Say no; you must stay here.

GAY. No, Madame.

MRS. M. [*smiling*]. Then I give you my hand for it.

GAY. But, Madame, I—

MRS. M. You refuse your hostess?

MAJ. [*hastily*]. Pray, excuse me, Mrs. Mellowes, I—

MRS. M. Sir!

MAJ. Fly hither as soon as you can. Meantime he shall not get ten feet from me.

MRS. M. Come, sir. Everyone else has gone within; the figure is beginning. [GAY *hands her into the house. Only* MARJORIE *and the* MAJOR *are left in the garden.*]

LAW. It is now or never!

MAR. [*turning to him*]. Will, were you truly stupefied—when you found I—I loved you?

LAW. Truly, dear.

MAR. [*feverishly*]. I mean were you utterly taken aback? Did you lose the power to think of anything else, as you say? Answer me, upon your soul!

LAW. Upon my soul I did! Who could do otherwise? That man is crawling upon us.

MAR. [*gazing upon the stout officer with immense loathing*]. The monster! The odious, red-faced monster! [*She shudders.*]

LAW. What is it, dear?

MAR. Nothing. Now go, sweetheart, before he comes a foot nearer.

LAW. If you can detain him two minutes—

MAR. I will. No, no, not by anything foolish—only when you have started, you must not look back—you must not lose the fraction of a second—you must not look back—give me your sacred oath not to look back!

LAW. You have it, sweet.

MAR. Farewell!

LAW. Farewell!

MAJ. A word with you, sir. [LAWRENCE *walks more rapidly.*] Not so fast, my friend! [LAWRENCE *breaks into a run; the* MAJOR *pursues;* MARJORIE *throws herself in front of the* MAJOR.]

MAR. Stop!

MAJ. Out of the way, Mistress! That man is a rebel spy! I arrest him in the King's name! Officers of the Sixty—

[MARJORIE *throws one lightning glance over her shoulder, then she throws her arms about the* MAJOR'S *neck and kisses him twice, then releases him and flies from him, the* MAJOR *tearing after her, shouting:*] Fly not, sweetheart—I am here, my goddess. Thou shalt have a dozen kisses—a thousand—ten—thous—

[*A horse is heard by* MARJORIE—*not by the* MAJOR—*galloping away.*]

POOR LITTLE KEY.

"WHAT would you do," said the little key,
To the teak-wood box, "except for me?"

The teak-wood box gave a gentle creak
To the little key; but it did not speak.

"I believe," said the key, "that I will hide
In the crack down there by the chimney-side,

"Just so this proud old box may see
How little it's worth, except for me."

It was long, long afterward, in the crack
They found the key, and they brought it back,

And it said, as it chuckled and laughed to itself,
"Now I'll be good to the box on the shelf."

But the little key stopped with a shiver and shock,
For there was a bright new key in the lock.

And the old box said, "I'm sorry, you see;
But the place is filled, my poor little key."

UNCLE ALEC'S BAD FOLKS.

ANNIE HAMILTON DONNELL.

VIRGINIA threw herself into the hammock and rocked back and forth violently.

"I'm going to jail to-day. Haven't you always known I'd come to it sooner or later? There's Uncle Alec sick abed and worried to death about his bad folks; and Aunt Alec's got her flowers all picked—I'm the only one who's in condition to go to jail. It's my first sentence, and it's a nuisance!"

The girl in the invalid's chair smiled.

"Do you know, dear, I'd be willing to go to jail if I could get my feet and walk?"

"You poor dear!" Virginia cried. "You'd be just the one to preach to Uncle Alec's bad folks. But me—it's carrying coals to Newcastle. They ought not to send me missionarying. I'm a heathen myself."

A tiny girl trotted down the walk. Virginia's face broke into smiles.

"Oh, little Hop o' My Thumb, come here. Don't you want to go with Virginia and help the naughty folks be good?"

"Yes; I'll go help the naughty folks be good. I put 'em in the closhet an' say, 'Now, fink o' your sins like ev'rything!'"

In the early afternoon Virginia loaded herself with Aunt Alec's flowers and started away with Hop o' My Thumb.

"We're going to jail, Hop o' My Thumb. Don't you feel queer?"

"Yes; I feel queery. Is it like goin' to the Unheaven place, 'Ginia, where there's heaps o' bad folks?"

"No, dear, not like that; Uncle Alec's bad folks can be sorry and begin all over again after awhile."

"After they get out o' the closhet?"

"Yes; Uncle Alec tells them to begin all over—that God will forgive them, you know."

"Yes, I know—same as he fo'gives me, 'times, when I eat out o' mamma's sugar-bowl. He fo'gived me twice to-day."

A youthful-looking jailer met them outside the great iron door.

"Uncle Alec is sick abed, Mr. Cummings, so I came to bring Aunt Alec's flowers. She wanted me to distribute them for her, but I wish you could, Mr. Cummings! We're afraid of the prisoners, aren't we, Hop o' My Thumb?"

"Oh, no, I isn't, not a speck! I like bad folks dreffly. I know how they feel when they eat sugar out o' their mammas' sugar-bowls. I'll 'stribute the flowers, 'Ginia."

The long, bare hall full of dim daylight was lined with rows of cells with grated windows. Some of the prisoners lounged about on the hard benches without. They stared in astonishment at the fair vision of the tall girl and the tiny one in their white dresses, with the glory of the flowers about them like a halo.

"My God!" muttered one of the men, who had had a tall, fair daughter once. And one beside him gazed at the tiny one wistfully.

"There were two especially," whispered Virginia. "The one who was sick, and the one who was almost ready to be let out. Aunt Alec sent special flowers to them."

The jailer opened one of the heavy doors.

"This is the one that's goin' out," he muttered.

"Here's a couple of ladies to see you, Bill. The minister's sick, and they come instead. Walk right in, ladies. Bill's going into society again pretty quick, and a little practicin' will do him good!"

Bill glowered at them in surly silence. But the tiny one crossed the little bare room and peered up into the grim face:

"Is you one o' the bad folks? Well, so is me, but he fo'gived me, God did. I guess he's got dreffly tired, but he did it. I guess you'd better take me in your lap, don't you? You can't talk so well when you're standin' up, you know. I can climb up—there! Now, whyfore don't you tell me if God's fo'gived you? You look so sorryful. I'm 'fraid he hasn't. Well, he will, 'cause he fo'gived me. I asked him to. Want me to show you how to do it? You put your hands right so, and shut your eyes—you got your eyes shut?—honest and true? I can't see 'cause I've got mine shut up. Now, you say, 'Dear

God, I want you to fo'give me 'cause I ate it out o' my mother's sugar-bowl. I guess I won't again'—you better say, 'I guess'; it's safer. 'Please to keep me from being a bad folks any more, forever 'n' ever. Amen.' There!"

Virginia had crept forward and laid the bunch of white flowers in the tiny one's lap.

"Tell him about them, Hop o' My Thumb," she whispered.

"They're for you, that's what, and they're all white ones, so's you'll be white. 'Ginia said Aunt Alec said so. I guess that's why my mamma gets me white dresses. Smell 'em. Oh, my! don't you know how? You do it this way."

"We must go now, dear," Virginia said. But the grim man tightened his fingers round the tiny one's arm.

"Let her stay a spell—till you're ready to go back. I'll mind her all right. I had a little young one once, an' I minded her. Let her stay."

"I'm goin' to stay wiv Mr. Bill. I like it in this teenty room, an' he likes me, don't you, Mr. Bill?"

And so Virginia left her there while she visited the prisoner who was dying.

"I ain't sure but he will go out before Bill does, now," the jailer remarked. But Virginia noticed that his big voice softened when he spoke to the haggard man on the cot.

"Well, Barney, how is it now? Ain't sufferin' quite so bad, are you?—not quite. The minister's sick, too; he sent this young lady to see you instead of comin' himself."

"And I brought you some moss roses—see?" She let them fall in a pink, sweet shower on his coverlet. He put out a great blue-veined hand and lifted one and then another.

"There was a bush of moss roses grew at home, close up to the door. Mother never let us boys pick any except on Sundays. Moss roses and mother's hymns—and Sunday—always went together. When I've recollected one—it ain't been often—I've recollected the other two. They're sweet-smellin', ain't they! They smell of Sunday, and the hymns, and mother."

"What were the hymns?" questioned Virginia. "Maybe, per-

haps, I could sing one." She had never sung before strangers in her life.

"There was the 'Jesus-lover' one, and the one with 'majestic sweetness' in it. We boys would sit on the doorsteps and listen, as still as mice. I ain't recollected before for ten years."

"'Jesus, lover of my soul,
Let me to Thy bosom fly,'"

sang Virginia's clear voice softly. It filled the little cell and ran over into the big bare corridor. It rose clearer and louder as the verses went on. Virginia had forgotten to be afraid.

"'Plenteous grace with Thee is found,
Grace to pardon all my sin.'"

The listless loungers outside crept to the door. Bill and the tiny one came, hand-in-hand.

"Sing, Mr. Bill—hurry, sing!" the tiny one commanded, and one by one the men ventured in, with a low, bass rumble.

"'Cover my defenceless head
With the shadow of Thy wing.'"

And so with the moss roses clasped tight in his hand and mother's hymns ringing in his soul, one of Uncle Alec's Bad Folks went out.

THE COQUETTE SPEAKS.

EDMUND VANCE COOKE.

I SAY I do not love you. I am gay,
And with my laughter waft your vows away;
For you, you say you love me, smile and sigh,
And fire me with the fervor of your eye.
Ah me, the pity of our mimic play!
If only either of us did not lie!

WHEN SANTA CLAUS WENT WOOING.

JOE LINCOLN.

"FUST time I see her, I says ter myself, 'Shadrach Peters,' says I, 'that's the lady you've been lookin' fer all these years.' I made up my mind then that she was going to be my wife, and what I once say, I stand behind. You know me."

The coasting schooner, Guess Again, Shadrach Peters, master, was rolling and pounding through the icy waters of Vineyard Sound. Capt. Peters was seated on the locker at one side of her cabin; his first mate, Mr. Alvin Small, was seated opposite.

"Yes, sir-ee! Sophrony Baker is all right. She's a widder, she is, and they tell me that she's got two of the nicest boys that ever was. I ain't never seen 'em, but I feel it in my bones that 'twould be a pleasure ter be a father ter them boys."

"What I don't understand, is what you're goin' ter do with them things."

"Them things" were prominently displayed on the cabin table. There was a red coat, short, and trimmed with cheap fur; red trousers, fur-trimmed like the coat; a big fur hat, fur-topped boots, and a white wig and long white beard.

"I cal'cated they'd puzzle yer, but they're part of my scheme. Here's t'other part."

He pulled from the locker beside him a canvas bag, and displayed wooden horses, tin soldiers, popguns, and toys of various description. "Now yer see, don't yer? Santy Claus."

"Santy Claus."

"Yes, Santy Claus. When yer want to please a girl, yer tell her how pretty she is; ain't that so? When yer want ter please a woman, yer tell her she looks younger than she ever did; ain't that so? Well, when yer want ter make a ten-strike with a mother, yer do yer best ter stand in with her children; ain't that so?"

"I wouldn't wonder if 'twas."

"You bet it is! Well, Sophrony told me once that she allers had

a Christmas-tree fer the children on Christmas Eve. Ter night'll be Christmas Eve, and my idee is ter run the Guess Again inter Orham harbor, 'stead of keepin' on ter Boston. Then I'll take my bundles over ter the shore, lug 'em up somewhere near her house, rig up in my Santy Claus duds and bust in on 'em jest as they're havin' the tree. Presents fer the boys, oceans of them. Then I'll say ter the widder, 'Mebbe you think old Santy didn't bring you nothin', but he did. Here, that's fer you.'"

"That" was a somewhat showy but expensive ring.

"'That's fer you,'" I'll say, 'on one condition. Yer must take me with it.' Yer see, the children will be awfully tickled, ands he'll be pleased ter think I took so much pains ter please them, and the ring 'll show her that I don't mean ter be stingy with her; and, take it all tergether, it looks ter me like a winnin' combination. But, of course, I ain't had no experience. You think 'twill fetch her, don't yer?"

"Sure."

"And you'll stick by me, land me in the dory, and won't say nawthin' ter none of the hands?"

"Sartin I will."

"Alvin, you're a brick. Mebee I can do as much fer you some day."

It was the ice in the lower bay that threatened to wreck the scheme. Progress was provokingly slow. Twilight found the schooner some miles from the mouth of Orham harbor, and with the packed ice ahead impenetrable.

"Tide's settin' in," said the exasperated skipper. "This stuff won't loosen up none till ebb, and everything's up spout. I never did have no luck."

"I was jest wonderin,' captain, if 'twouldn't be possible ter set yer ashore in the dory somewheres along here. You'd have ter walk three or four miles, but bein' as it's so important—"

"Don't say another word, Alvin, I don't see why I didn't think of that myself. And I won't have ter walk no four mile, neither. D'yer see that inlet over there with the streak of open water through it? Well, that's Eel Crick, and Eel Crick is the outlet of Clam Pond. What's the matter with you rowin' me up the crick and the length

of the pond—Sophrony's house is only a little ways from the upper end of the pond."

"But won't the pond be froze over?"

"Tain't likely. It's salt water, and there oughter be a strong tide. Anyhow, we'll resk it, come on."

Capt. Peters went below to pack up his costume and presents, while Mr. Small superintended the anchoring of the schooner and getting the dory over side.

Eel Creek was open for its entire length, but Clam Pond appeared to be frozen all over. It was dark by this time, and the mate advised returning to the schooner and giving up the expedition for the night, but the anxious lover would listen to no such proposition.

"I'll walk acrost the pond on the ice," he said; "'pears ter be solid enough fur's we can see. Chuck out them bundles and I'll start."

But the bundles were heavy and very clumsy. The captain carried them in various positions, but ended by throwing them down on the ice and swearing vehemently. Then the mate had another idea.

"I tell yer, Cap'n Shad, there ain't no use in luggin' them Santy Claus duds. You put 'em on an' go round ter the hotel. The Guess Again will be in the harbor by the mornin' more'n likely."

"Hotel! Yer don't s'pose I'd go ter a hotel in them red signals, do yer? That ain't a bad idea of yours, though. I'll tell yer what, I'll ask the widder ter let me sleep in her barn ter-night, and you git my reg'lar clothes round early in the mornin'."

It was a chilly change and a slow one; at length, however, he stood forth garbed in the red suit!

"Are yer goin' ter put on the wig and whiskers?" asked the mate.

"Yes, yes; I'll put em' on. It's the easiest way ter lug 'em; besides, mebbe they'll keep my ears warm. There, that's all right. What in time are yer grinnin' at?"

"Oh, nawthin', I was only goin' ter—a—he—sneeze."

The captain's walk began well, but an hour later the stars were treated to the somewhat unusual spectacle of a nautical Santa Claus seated upon his pack in the middle of a floating cake of ice, and expressing his opinion of the situation with fluent and blasphemous vigor.

On Christmas morning, just after breakfast, Peter Baker, aged

eleven, commonly known as "Spuds," was on his way to Clam Pond to test his new rubber boots. Peter was accompanied by his bosom friend Hartwell Deane, whose age was nine, and who rejoiced in the name of "Gizzard."

Peter's younger brother Abner accompanied the party, but as he was only six years old and played with dolls, he didn't count.

When the boys came in sight of the pond Abner ran on ahead, while Peter and Hartwell followed more leisurely.

"What's Ab yellin' about?" queried Hartwell.

Abner, standing at the top of the sand bluff, was dancing and screaming in great excitement.

"Santy Claus! Santy Claus!"

"He b'lieves in him" said Peter, "he ain't old enough ter know that Santy Claus is jest yer folks. What about Santy Claus, Ab?"

"He's down here. Hurry up! Quick!"

"Sees somebody he thinks is Santy, he don't know any better. Ain't nothin' but a kid. Jiminy crickets! Spuds, look here."

"By gum! I b'lieve it is Santy Claus."

"There ain't no such thing, and you know it, Gizzard. It's some feller dressed up."

"He hollered ter me," said Abner. "There, he's hollerin' ag'in."

"What did he say, Spuds?"

"Said for us ter take Gabe Blanchard's dory and come and git him ashore."

Gabe Blanchard's dory was anchored close by; the boys climbed in and the older ones took the oars.

"He's settin' on his bag of presents," announced Abner; "I bet there's all kind of dandy things in there."

"Hold on a minute," said Peter; "I've thought of somethin'! Stop rowin' Gizzard. Who are you?"

The captain did not answer. He was trying to invent a name, when Abner saved him the trouble.

"Ain't you Santy Claus?" called the latter.

"Yes, that's it; that's who I am; I'm Santy Claus."

"What'll yer give us if we take yer off?" asked Peter.

"Give yer? Give yer? Why, I'll give yer each a present out of my bag."

"Is that bag full of presents?"

"Sartin."

"All right, then, we'll take yer off if yer'll give us the whole bag full."

"The whole bag full! Why, you greedy little brats; the whole bag full! You come here and put me ashore mighty quick."

"Not unless you give us that bag of presents. If you're Santy Claus you can git lots more. Besides, you've been mighty stingy ter me and Gizzard this year."

The captain roared back, "no!"

"All right. Pull for the shore, Gizzie."

The dory's bow swung toward the beach, and the captain changed his mind. It would be only a temporary loan. He could regain his property as soon as he got aboard the dory.

"I'll give 'em ter yer," he called. "Come and take me off."

"Not till we git them presents. We'll stay here, and you can undo the bag and pitch 'em to us, one at a time."

It was useless to argue. The bag was opened, and the toys tossed one by one into the hands of the boys in the dory, and the bankrupt Santa Claus again demanded to be taken aboard the boat. But the crafty Peter knew better than to allow it. He untied the rope from the dory's anchor and tossed the free end to the captain.

"Hold on ter that and we'll tow yer in; Abner, put them things back inter the bag."

Slowly the dory with the ice cake in tow neared the beach. As the boat's bow touched the shore, Peter and Hartwell, with the bag of presents between them, leaped to the sand and scampered up the face of the bluff. By the time the captain had pulled his clumsy craft to land they were high up on the crest of the hill.

Another than Captain Shadrach Peters would have postponed his call upon the widow till a more auspicious occasion, but the skipper of the Guess Again was determination itself. He determined to wear the wig and whiskers, as they might serve to conceal his identity should he meet any of his Orham acquaintances.

Little Abner Baker had not fled with his elder brother and Hartwell, but had hidden behind Blanchard's fish shanty, determined to make the best of gazing upon Santa Claus, and when Capt. Peters started down the lane that led to Mrs. Baker's, Abner followed him.

Jimmie Ellis was leaning over his front fence, and Abner hailed him. "Come on, Jimmie, it's Santy Claus." Jimmie's yell of delighted surprise brought out five other little Ellis hopefuls, and the captain's following grew in numbers.

"It's Santy Claus!" screamed the children. "Hooray!"

Soon children were racing from all directions, and the crowd presently included men as well as boys. The shouting was tremendous.

It was a panting, ragged wreck of a Santa Claus, who, after shaking off his pursuers in the pine grove behind the Widow Baker's domicile, crept down in the shadow of the stonewall and dodged in at the kitchen door.

The kitchen was empty, and the skipper sat down in a chair and regained his breath. He heard voices in the parlor and surmised that they were those of the widow and her boys, and when he tiptoed to the door and peeped through the crack he saw the widow was there, but the boys were not. She was talking with a man whom Peters did not know, a fat, smiling, smooth-shaven fellow, and a glib talker. His chair was much too near the widow's, and he beamed upon that lady in a manner which the captain considered disgusting.

"Yes," said the smiling individual, "they cal'late he was an escaped lunatic, though where he come from nobody knows. He was dressed in some sort of an outlandish rig with fur onto it, and the boys say he told 'em he was Santy Claus."

"A lunatic! how dreadful! I declare I'm afraid ter stay here alone. Suppose he should run right inter this house."

"Well, I thought of that, Sophrony. That's one reason why I called. Seem's if you needed a man ter protect yer, don't it? Now, there wouldn't no lunatics hurt yer if I was here. Sophrony, I think a heap of you, and you know it. That's why I says ter myself, Barnabas Badger, that business of Sophrony's has hung fire long

enough. It's time you stepped round and made yer offer. So here I be, and I'm goin' ter make it. Sophrony—"

"Hold yer tongue!"

The widow screamed and sprang to her feet.

"You git!"

"Lord! it's the lunatic!"

"Oh, Barnabas, protect me!"

"Who—who are you?" faltered the champion thus appealed to.

"Never you mind! I ain't used ter havin' ter repeat my orders, and if you ain't out of here in one minute, you'll have a lesson in flyin'. Now, git!"

"Oh, Barnabas, don't go!" pleaded the trembling Sophronia.

"I—I—guess I'd better, so's ter git help; I—guess—perhaps I—had."

The last word was spoken in the dining-room. The protector had fled.

"Now, then, Sophrony, I'm sorry ter bounce your company in that fashion, but I ain't been through what I've been through jest ter stand by and see another chap make his offer ahead of me. Will you marry me?"

"Marry you? Why, I don't know you."

"Don't know me! Sophrony Baker, can you look me in the face and say you don't know me? Wall, wall! I knew I'd been through enough ter turn a body's hair gray, but I'm blessed if I thought 'twould change me so my friends wouldn't know me." He put his hand to his face. "Good land! I fergot I had on them trimmin's."

He tore off the wig and whiskers. "Now, d'yer know me?"

"Why—why, I do believe it's Captain Peters! What does it all mean?"

Then Captain Shadrack Peters unfolded a plain, unvarnished tale. But more than all, he dwelt upon his undying devotion for Sophronia Baker.

"But, Cap'n Peters, how am I to know that you really care for me?"

"How? Why, say, do you think I'd be fool enough ter go and git this way for my health?"

Then the ring was brought forth and exhibited.

"Why, it says from 'Shadrach to Sophronia.' I should like to know, Cap'n Peters, why you took it for granted that I would marry you?"

"Why, Sophrony? Why, because I started out ter git yer, and I will if I have ter wait twenty years."

"Oh, well, then, if that's the case then I'd better say 'yes' at once and save time. But really, Shadrach, I ought to tell you that that gentleman was only my cousin Barnabas, who has been talkin' of buyin' my woodlot, and who'd come to offer me a price for it."

When the valiant Mr. Badger returned to his cousin's residence he was accompanied by a hundred men and boys armed with pitchforks, clubs and brickbats. They were prepared to capture the lunatic at all hazards, but they were not prepared to have that person meet them at the door with his arm about the plump waist of the widow.

QUARTET'S ANTHEM.

S. W. FOSS.

OH, yes, I heerd the anthem sung by thet big church quartet,
My wife she raved about it, but I kep' my own mouth shet.
"No sweeter song," she sed, "is sung by any angel's lip;"
An' I sot still an' heerd her talk, an' never raised a yip.
The absence of idees wuz drowned in plenteousness of voice.
What strict economy of words, an' extravagance of noise!
For they were stingy of their words and generous of their strains,
An' they were spendthrifts of their lungs an' misers of their brains.
An' they call this mighty music! 'Taint for me to say it's not;
But I think music's better w'en it's slightly mixed with thought;
I think yer lungs give forth to men a more inspirin' strain
If they first have made connection with the ingine of yer brain.
W'en Maria rocked our boy to sleep an' sung her baby song,
That quiet Sabbath evenin' with the shadders growin' long,
"The music of that baby song," sez I to her, sez I,
"It beats yer quartet anthem out, an' knocks the thing sky high!"

THE NEW BROTHER.

HALL CAINE.

[Cutting from "The Eternal City."]

A BOY of ten in tattered clothes, with an accordion in a case swung over one shoulder and under the other a wooden cage containing a grey squirrel. It was a December night in London, and the southern lad had nothing to shelter his little body from the northern cold, but his short velveteen jacket, red waistcoat, and knickerbockers. He was going home after a long day in Chelsea, and dipping into side streets in order to escape the laughter of the London boys and the attentions of policemen.

Coming to the Italian quarter in Soho, he stopped at the door of a shop to see the time. It was eight o'clock. There was an hour to wait before he would be allowed to go indoors. The shop was a baker's and the window was full of cakes and confectionery. From an iron grid on the pavement came the warm breath of the oven underground. The boy dived into his pocket and brought out some copper coins and counted them. There was ninepence. Ninepence was the sum he had to take home every night, and there was not a halfpenny to spare. He knew that perfectly before he began to count, but his appetite had tempted him to try again if his arithmetic was not at fault.

The air grew colder and it began to snow. The traffic speedily became less, and things looked big in the thick air. The boy was wandering aimlessly through the streets, waiting for nine o'clock. When he thought the hour was near, he realized that he had lost his way. He screwed up his eyes to see if he knew the houses and shops and signs, but everything seemed strange.

He was very cold. The snow had got into his shoes and through the rents in his cross-gartered stockings. His red waistcoat wanted buttons, and he could feel that his shirt was wet. He tried to shake the snow off by stamping, but it clung to his velveteens. His numbed fingers could scarcely hold the cage, which was also full of snow. By

the light over a door he looked at his squirrel. The little thing was trembling pitifully in its icy bed, and he took it out and breathed on it to warm it, and then put it in his bosom.

He grew dizzy and sat down by one of the pillars of a big porch. He felt sleepy. A church clock struck nine, and he started up with a guilty feeling, but his limbs were stiff and he sank back again. He blew two or three breaths onto the squirrel inside his waitscoat, and fell into a doze.

As the clock struck nine, a class of Italian lads was breaking up for the night, and the teacher, looking out of the window, said:

"While we have been telling the story of the great road to our country a snow-storm has come, and we shall have enough to do to find our road home."

The lads laughed by way of answer, and cried: "Goodnight, doctor."

"Goodnight, boys, and God bless you," said the teacher.

He was an elderly man, with a noble forehead. His face, a sad one, was lighted up by a feeble smile; his voice was soft, and his manner was gentle. When the boys were gone he followed them into the street.

He had not gone far into the snowy haze before he began to realize that his playful warning had not been amiss.

"Well, well," he thought, "only a few steps, and yet so difficult to find."

Coming at last to the porch of his house, he almost trod on a little black and white object lying huddled at the base of one of the pillars.

"A boy sleeping out on a night like this! Come, come," he said severely, "this is wrong," and he shook the little fellow to waken him.

The boy did not answer, but he began to mutter in a sleepy monotone, "Don't hit me, sir. It was the snow. I'll not come home late again. Ninepence, sir, and Jinny is so cold."

The man paused a moment, then turned to the door and rang the bell sharply.

Half-an-hour later the little musician was lying on a couch in the doctor's surgery, a cheerful room with a fire and a soft lamp under a shade. He was still unconscious, but his damp clothes had been

taken off and he was wrapped in blankets. The doctor sat at the boy's head and moistened his lips with brandy, while a woman, with a face of a saint, knelt at the end of the couch and rubbed his little feet and legs. After awhile the boy moaned and opened his eyes, the big helpless eyes of childhood, black as a sloe, and with long black lashes. He looked at the fire, the lamp, the carpet, the blankets, the figures at either end of the couch, and with a smothered cry he raised himself as though to escape.

"Carino!" said the doctor, smoothing the boy's curly hair. "Lie still a little longer."

The boy sank back. But presently he raised himself again, and gazed around the room as if looking for something. The good mother understood him perfectly, and from a chair on which his clothes were lying she picked up his little grey squirrel. It was frozen stiff with the cold and now quite dead, but he grasped it tightly and kissed it passionately, while big tear-drops rolled on to his cheeks.

"Carino!" said the doctor again, taking the dead squirrel away, and after awhile the boy lay quiet and was comforted.

"What is your name, my son?"

"David Leone."

"A beautiful name, carino! David Le-o-ne. Where have I heard that name before, I wonder? Your father is a farmer?"

"I have no father."

"Carino! But your mother is alive—yes?"

"I have no mother."

"Caro mio! Caro mio! You shall not go to the institution to-morrow, my son."

"Listen, father!" said the woman.

Two little feet were drumming on the floor above.

"Baby hasn't gone to bed yet. She wouldn't sleep until she had seen the boy, and I had to promise she might come down presently."

"Let her come down now," said the doctor.

The boy was supping a basin of broth when the door burst open with a bang, and like a tiny cascade which leaps and bubbles in the sunlight, a little maid of three came bounding into the room. She was trailing behind her a train of white nightdress, hobbling on the

portion in front, and carrying under her arm a cat, which, being held out by the neck, was coiling its body and kicking its legs like a rabbit.

But having entered with so fearless a front, the little woman drew up suddenly at sight of the boy, and, entrenching herself behind the doctor, began to swing by his coat-tails, and to take furtive glances at the stranger in silence and aloofness.

"Bless their hearts! what funny things they are to be sure," said the mother. "Somebody seems to have been telling her she might have a brother some day, and when nurse said to Susanna, 'The doctor has brought a boy home with him to-night,' nothing was so sure as that this was the brother they had promised her, and yet now . . . Roma, you silly child, why don't you come and speak to the poor boy who was nearly frozen to death in the snow?"

But Roma's privateering fingers were now deep in her father's pocket, in search of a specimen of the sugar-stick which seemed to live and grow there. She found two sugar-sticks there this time, and sight of a second suggested a bold adventure. Sidling up toward the couch, but still holding on to the doctor's coat-tails, like a craft that swings to anchor, she tossed one of the sugar-sticks on to the floor at the boy's side. The boy smiled and picked it up, and the little daughter of Eve proceeded to proper overtures.

"Oo a boy?"

The boy assented.

"Oo me brodder?"

The boy's smile paled perceptibly.

"Oo lub me?"

The tide in the boy's eyes was rising rapidly.

"Oo lub me eber and eber?"

The tears were gathering fast, when the doctor, smoothing the boy's dark curls, said:

"You have a little sister of your own far away in the Campagna Romana—yes?"

"No, sir."

"Perhaps it's a brother."

"I . . . I have nobody," said the boy, and his voice broke on the last word with a thud.

"You shall not go to the institution at all, David," said the doctor, softly.

"Doctor Roselli!" exclaimed his wife. But something in the doctor's face smote her instantly and she said no more.

"Time for bed, baby."

But baby had many excuses. There were the sugar-sticks, and the pussy, and the boy-brother, and finally her prayers to say.

"Say them here, then, sweetheart," said her mother, and with her cat pinned up again under one arm and the sugar-stick held under the other, kneeling face to the fire, but screwing her half-closed eyes at intervals in the direction of the couch, the little maid put her hands together and said:

"Our Father oo art in Heben, alud be dy name. Dy kingum tum. Dy will be done on eard as it is in Heben. Gib us dis day our dayey bread, and forgib us our trelspasses as we forgib dem lat trelspass ayenst us. And lee us not into temstashuns, but deliber us from ebil . . . for eber and eber. Amen."

The house in Soho Square was perfectly silent an hour afterward. In the surgery the lamp was turned down, the cat was winking and yawning at the fire, and the doctor sat in a chair in front of the fading glow and listened to the measured breathing of the boy behind him.

The doctor was thinking of his own little daughter, whose life had been a long holiday, and then of the boy whose days had been an unbroken bondage.

"Yet who knows but in the rough chance of life our little Roma may not some day . . . God forbid!"

The boy moved in his sleep and laughed the laugh of a dream that is like the sound of a breeze in soft summer grass, and it broke the thread of painful reverie.

No one in the great, free land of his adoption, not even the saint who was his wife, had ever yet opened the door of his most solemn and sacred memories. A palace in Rome—himself young, ardent, enthusiastic, burning with love of country and desire to serve its cause, —his father a Prince of the Papal Court, proud, imperious, and uncompromising—the Pope trying in vain to make peace between them —expulsion—poverty—obscurity—exile—England—a new name—a

new profession—life among the people—liberty! Then marriage with a good Englishwoman almost as solitary as himself, and last of all, like the angel's breath on the pool of Bethesda, the birth of their child, their little Roma—Roma, the healer of his heart—Roma, after the city of his soul!

The train of his memories was interrupted by voices in the street, and he drew the curtain of the window aside and looked out. The snow had ceased to fall, and the moon was shining; the leafless trees were casting their delicate black shadows on the whitened ground, and the yellow light of a lantern on the opposite angle of the square showed a group of lads singing a Christmas Carol.

"While shepherds watched their flocks by night, all seated on the ground,
The angel of the Lord came down, and glory shone around."

Doctor Roselli touched with his lips the forehead of the sleeping boy. He had found Roma's new brother.

OLD GLORY ALOFT.

FRANK L. STANTON.

SHE'S up there—Old Glory—where lightnings are sped;
She dazzles the nations with ripples of red;
And she'll wave for us living, or droop o'er us dead—
The flag of our country forever!

She's up there—Old Glory—how bright the stars stream!
And the stripes like red signals of liberty gleam!
And we dare for her, living, or dream the last dream
'Neath the flag of our country forever!

She's up there—Old Glory—no tyrant-dealt scars—
No blur on her brightness—no stain on her stars!
The brave blood of heroes hath crimsoned her bars—
She's the flag of our country forever!

BUD ZUNTS'S MAIL.

RUTH McENERY STUART.

[Arranged by Sarah E. Pittman from a story published in *Harper's Magazine* December, 1893; afterward printed in collection "Carlotta's Intended and Other Tales," by the same author. Copyright, 1893, 1894, by Harper & Brothers. Published by permission of Harper & Brothers.]

BUD ZUNTS came out of the Simpkinsville post-office. Mounting the seat of his wagon, and turning his oxen's heavy heads homeward, he began muttering to himself:

"'Nothin' for you, Bud Zunts!'—Seem like I ought to've heerd that often enough to know it by this time, but I don't, I don't even to say half believe it, when I do hear it—no, I don't; th' aint been a night since she's been a-sayin' it, but I've mo'n half expected to see her han' out a letter, 'n' I can see her smile like's ef she was tickled to see me paid at last fer stoppin' every night in all these years t'enquire. 'Tis purty tiresome—some nights—but of co'se when a man's a co'tin' he can't expect—he can't expect—tell the truth, I reck'n I don' know nothin' 'bout co'tin', but here I set a-talkin' 'bout co'tin' 's ef everybody knowed it, 'n' I don't know ez anybody do but me; wonder ef Miss C'delia think I'd stop every night fer fo' year—goin' on—'n' ast fer letters 'n' never git a *one* 'n' wait tell the last person goes out—wonder ef she do think I do that—a—way jist to be doin'! I bin a co'tin' Miss C'delia for fo' year—goin' on—move on, Bute! get up, there, Fairy! Bute and Fairy's about ez downhearted a pair o' oxen to-night ez ever I see. Yes, I been co'tin' Miss C'delia, but I ain't never spoke yet—many nights ez I've laid off to. Ef she didn't keep the post-office so's I c'n see her every evenin' and a Sunday mornin's thro' the little window, 'n' get my daily incouragements 'n' discouragements I'd 'ave spoken long ago—'n' maybe 'stid o' me an' Bute and Fairy trudgin' 'long so slow in the mud to-night, not keerin' much whether or when we git home, I might be—we might be—she might—wo' there." And so he proceeded on his lonely way.

After the post-office was closed Miss Cordelia Cummins, the postmistress, stood for a long time behind her pigeon-hole barrier, looking over the remaining mail:

"Here's mo' letters 'n' enough fer Kate Clark—and papers, too," she said to herself. "I see she's got two letters from the telegraph station. I do wonder if Kate writes love verses to him—I hardly b'lieve it of her. Though I don't know. Here's at least fo' love-letters all in a row, 'n' I don't doubt the las' one of 'em is so sweet inside, that if they was lef' open in the sun the honey bees 'd light on them—sometimes I do wish't I'd get a letter myself—just a real out-and-out love-letter! same ez ef I wasn't postmistress; I do hones' believe thet th' ain't another person a livin' in the county but's got a letter some time'r other—'less 'n' co'se Bud Zunts—sometimes I do hate to tell him th' aint nothin' fer 'im, pore Bud, I know he's dyin' to speak to me—ef I know anything—'n' sometimes I'm 'most tempted to help him out—but I won't —ef he's a *womanish man* I won't match him by bein' a *mannish woman.* But ef—ef Bud was to take the pneumony to-morrer—well, I don't know what I'd do, but I reck'n, knowin' what's on his mind and what's on mine, it'd be my abounden' duty to go, 'thout sayin' a word, an' nuss 'im thoo it—I've prayed thet the Lord wouldn't make it my clair duty to go and nuss Bud thoo a spell o' sickness befo' he's found courage to speak his mine to me; I would o' prayed the Lord to give him courage, but I won't do it. Ef it's come to sech a pass that a man has to ask me to marry him with the courage I prayed fer—then I'll keep post-office all my days 'n' jest live along with my Polly parrot as I do; I won't give Bud no encouragement, no I won't, Polly nor myself, neither, 'n' I won't make an extra yard o' tattin' tell he's spoke—'deed I won't—I declare ef Sally Ann Brooks ain't a sendin' a postal card to New York to order a ready-made nightgownd. I do vow some folks ain't got a bit of modesty—'n' her own name mentioned, 'n' her measure, too, 'n' everybody 'twixt here 'n' New York liable to read it—'n' most o' the postal clerks men at that! They's a good many postals thet I disapprove of left this office, but this is the worst. I've got a notion to put it into a envelope 'n' 'dress it over again—not fer Sally Ann's sake—ef she wants to discuss her nightgownds with the readin' public gen'ally—

but for the sake of Simpkinsville's reputation in New York City. I'm goin'—to—do it—', twon't cost me but two cents." Seizing an envelope she proceeded forthwith to clothe and readdress the offensive card, and then clapping a stamp upon it, she exclaimed, with satisfaction, "Now you're decent."

Just then there came a rap at the door. "I'm a comin' right now! Why, howdy, Miss Brooks. Come in, Sally Ann."

"I come to ask you, Miss C'delia, ef I couldn't get back a postal I sent this mornin', that is, of co'se, less'n it's already gone."

"Why, no, Miss Sally, 'taint to say gone—but—but—"

"But you've done put it up in the bag an' it's fastened?"

"Well, yes, Sally Ann, tell the truth, the bag it's in is fastened up secure."

"I thought maybe 'twould be, 'n' I'm half glad; Miss C'delia, I want to ask you a question. Folks say that Bud Zunts is a co'tin' somebody by mail 'n' that he never goes to sleep 'thout comin' in for his letters, is that so?"

"Well, Sally Ann, sense you ask me, Bud does call for his mail purty reg'lar."

At this point both women were startled by a shrill scream quite near. In a high falsetto voice came the exclamation, "Nothin' for you, Bud Zunts"; this was followed by a peal of ringing laughter. Miss Brooks turned pale and became so nervous Miss Cordelia had to take her home. When she returned she walked directly up to Poll's perch and regarded him sternly. She said in a voice almost as metallic as his own, "Well, Polly Cummins, you an' I might ez well have it out first ez last, and now I want you to tell me how much do you know? You needn't wink at me, or put out your paw to shake hands, you've done committed yourself 'n' you can't back out of it. Speak out this minit, when I tell you. How much do you know? I say you've had your chance to play smarty, an' you've done it. You know of all the people in town they ain't nobody thet'd make more o' what you've said 'n' Sally Ann Brooks will. Answer me, Polly Cummins, how much do you know about me and Bud Zunts?"

It was the exact reproduction of her own intonation, and in it she discerned all the pent-up tragedy of the long waiting, the tenderness,

the resolve to be unyielding, which she had felt safely concealed by the oft-repeated form. "He don't know nothin' only what I've learned him, pore Poll, *but he's got to be unlearned*, that's what he's got to be, an' it's got to be did right away, 'n' I might as well begin now. Ef Poll's got to talk about Bud I'll see to it that he says somethin' to his credit, that I will, 'n' Simpkinsville folks can make what they choose out of it. They've done him the credit for gettin' love-letters 'n' I'll see that he keeps it."

"Polly, talk for me, say, 'A love letter-for you, Bud Zunts.'"

"Nothin' for you, Bud Zunts."

"A love-letter for you, Bud Zunts."

"Nothin' for you Bud Zunts."

"A love-letter"—

"Nothin' for you"—

"A love-letter"—

"Nothin'"—

"A love-letter"—

In one of the short pauses of this hopeless lesson a swishing sound quite near startled Miss Cordelia. Some one had dropped a letter into the box. She blew out the light and slipped into bed. Poll, awe-stricken by the sudden darkness, made no sound for some minutes and then, in a somewhat quavering voice, he ventured, "Nothin' for you, Bud Zunts," and Miss Cordelia did not correct him. After a prolonged silence Poll said, "Good night, Cordelia." "Good night, Polly." "Happy dreams," said the bird. But Miss Cordelia could not answer. She was crying.

When morning came she drilled Poll again in his new lesson, and all day long she kept repeating it over and over again, even though Poll would reiterate the old form. There was a heavy mail that night, and she was kept busy until late. Finally, when the crowd had dispersed and before she in the least realized it, Bud alone stood without, backing with his usual diffidence against the opposite wall. She opened her lips to say the familiar words, when Poll, close at her elbow, ducked his head, and looked through the window at Bud Zunts. A sudden panic seized poor Miss Cordelia; the bird had seemed to challenge her, and before she knew it she had said, "They's a love-letter for you,

Bud Zunts." Bud jumped as if he had been shot, while Poll, as if realizing the mistake, shrieked at the top of his voice, "Nothin' for you, Bud Zunts."

It was a critical moment for all three. If Miss Cordelia had not had a healthy heart she would probably have dropped dead then and there. Seeing Bud's eager face approach the window, she stammered, "Th' ain't a thing fer you, Bud. I don' know how on earth I come to say that—my mind—my mind's been consider'bly worreted to-day, an' Poll fretted me—an'—an'—I—I—tell the truth, I don' know what in the world put sech a word as that into my mouth."

Bud leaned in the window upon his folded arms and said, "Ef you want to know my thoughts about it, Miss C'delia, I reck'n God Almighty put it there. He knew it was about time I was gittin' a love-letter—ef ever I was goin' to git one—an' He knew there wasn't but one person I'd keer to git it from, an' He knew that you were that special particular person."

Miss Cordelia covered her face with her hands and began to weep. She sobbed out, "Oh, Bud, it all come o' me tryin' to teach Poll to tell you a story, an' now I'm paid, I know I've disgusted you, the way I've acted. After me standin' up here and encouragin' you to speak fo' four years goin' on, and you've not done it, and for me to out an' out *say* 'love-letter' to you, just ez much ez askin' you to speak love to me, 'n' you know that ef I'd of had any manners of shame, I'd 'ave died before I'd 'ave said it. Oh, Bud, it's awful!"

"What's awful, honey? Th' ain't nothin' been did that's awful."

* * * * * * * *

Poll drowses blinking on his perch in Bud Zunts's home. The clock strikes, he starts up and says, "Good night, Cordelia." "Happy dreams." "God bless you," pausing after each salutation until he is satisfactorily answered by his mistress, then he adds, "They's a love-letter for you, Bud Zunts," and Bud replies, "I know it, Poll, 'n' I've done taken it out o' the post-office."

ROMANCE OF THE WHITE COWL.

JAMES LANE ALLEN.

IN a corner of the Trappist monastery gardens a young monk, Father Palemon, was humbly at work. Faint with fasting and long labor he at last sat down against the monastery wall. Voices sounded just outside. Father Palemon listened unconsciously. A man spoke.

"If visitors are men, I take them inside the abbey wall; if they are women, I bring them thus far and try to describe the rest."

"Describe for me, then," a woman answered.

"How shall one describe these monks? They all tremble—perpetually tremble. I fancy their souls ache? How can a man believe that he approaches sainthood by destroying his manhood? The highest type of personal holiness is attained in the thick of the world's temptations. Heroisms worth speaking of nowadays are active, not meditative.

"One kind of monk has all my sympathy. Take a boy whose nature has nothing in common with the scourge and the cell. Immure him. Never let him get from beneath the shadow of the convent walls or away from the sound of masses and the waving of crucifixes. Such a monk is within these walls now. An illegitimate child, when his mother died he was brought to the boarding-school taught by the Trappists here. He has never left this valley since. With the sad lay-brothers the lonely little fellow ate and slept. His education finished, he became a lay-brother himself. Last year he took final vows, and now wears the white cowl of a priest. He will make a poor monk. He is like his mother—impulsive, passionate, trustful. I often imagine you two together. You, with your charities, untiring, beneficence, stand at one extreme. He is at the other—doing nothing, spending his magnificent manhood in a never-changing, never-ending routine of sterile vigils and fasts and prayers. Oh, we should change places, he and I! I should be there, he here looking up into your

face, loving you as I love you, and winning you as I never can. Oh, Madeline, Madeline, Madeline!"

The broken utterance ceased. Father Palemon had hardly breathed. Across the echoes of these voices came the bell summoning, loud and terrible, to instant prayer. He started up and ran, the skirts of his cowl loosened and dragged over the dirt, stained against the bruised weeds. At the door of the chapel he beheld them. Shame and alarm went through him. It was the first stain.

* * * * * * * *

At public confession and accusation Father Palemon rose and laid bare his whole sin.

His week of bitter penance over, much weakened, he was sent to relieve the fathers in the school across the road. Unawakened innocence had vanished from his eyes. They were full of thought and sorrow.

One day, his pupils gone, he watched from the school window a storm cloud rise, while the air trembled with distant thunder. Suddenly around a bend in the road a horse, without saddle or rider, rushed at full speed. Father Palemon ran out. Lying on the roadside was the form of a woman. He knelt, lifting the loosened, brown hair that hid her face. No woman had he ever looked on but the pictured Virgin.

Reverential, awe-stricken, he bent over her. Then, simply as the disciple John might have succored Mary, finding her wounded and fainting by the wayside, he bore her in his arms to the school-room for refuge from the bursting storm. There, spreading his great, soft cowl on the bare floor, he laid her, and with cold water and his coarse monk's handkerchief, bathed her temple where blood flowed from a little wound.

She opened her eyes, bewildered. "What place is this?"

"This is the school of the abbey. I was at the window when your horse ran past, and I brought you here."

"I must go home at once."

He shook his head. "You must remain here until the storm is over."

With the frankness of a wondering innocent child, he was kneeling quite close beside her. She got up and looked out upon the storm. His heart was swept with a wild, strange feeling.

Hers was the voice he had heard in the garden. Amid all his scourgings, fast and prayers that voice had never left him. He ached to think of the penance he must again endure on her account; he stood before her with arms folded.

"Why have you crossed my pathway thus to tempt me?"

"How do I tempt you."

"You tempt me to believe that woman is not a devil."

He hung upon her expected reply with pitiable eagerness.

"Some women may be what you say. But some are not. There are saintly women within your church."

"The women of the world are devils."

"What do you know of the women of the world?"

"I have been taught. You tempt me to doubt this—to believe that the fathers have lied to me. Are you a devil—tell me the truth."

True and pure she looked into his eyes.

"Who, in consecration of life, are most like you monks? Good women of the world. What are your vows? Poverty, labor, self-denial, chastity, prayer. Not one of these but is kept in the hearts of good women? You keep those vows for your own sake—they for the sake of others. They work for others as you never work; they pray for others as you never pray. In sickness and weariness, day and night, they deny themselves and sacrifice themselves for others as you have never done. You keep yourselves pure. So they keep themselves and make others pure. Your holiness is kept apart from temptation, they maintain theirs amid temptations that never cease. You pray for the world, they also work for it. Would you see love, sympathy and forgiveness, would you find vigils and patience and charity—go to the good women of the world. No, no! Some women may be what you call them,—but"

"You are one of these good women?"

"I spoke of others. I may be a devil as you say."

Through the scattering clouds the sunlight gilded her head as with a halo.

Through the confessions next morning, Father Palemon sat motionless, his face shadowed by his hood, his arms crossed, hiding a scarlet blood stain on his white cowl just over his heart, where the wounded head had lain.

A few hours later in the reception room of the abbot, his face whiter than his cowl, he fronted the aged abbot of whom he had demanded audience.

"You have disturbed my rest and meditations. The occasion must be extraordinary. Speak! Be brief!"

"The occasion *is* extraordinary. I shall be brief. Father Abbot, I am not fit to be a monk. I no longer believe it is my duty to live the life. Receive renunciation of my priestly vows and take back my cowl—"

The face of the abbot flushed and grew ashen.

"You are a priest of God, consecrated for life."

"Father, to-night I leave the monastery."

"Boy, to-night you confess to me. To-night I forgive you. Begin! Tell me everything."

"It is better untold."

"You gave yourself to my guidance as a sheep to a shepherd. I watch near you in danger, and lead you back when astray. Shall I be pushed aside—made naught of—"

"You are an old man, Father Abbot, nearer heaven than earth. But you have been young, is there not in the past of your buried life memory of some one of whom you would have risked the peace and pardon of your soul?"

The abbot made a gesture of sudden anguish.

"This purpose is of the Evil Spirit. Break it against the rock of the Church and you will be at peace again."

"Never at peace again here! I love her, Father Abbot! I think of her night and day! I am no priest. My place is in the world."

"God in heaven dost Thou punish me thus! See, I am an old man, with but few years to live; you are the only tie that binds me to my race. I have watched over you since you were brought here a little child. I have nursed you through months of sickness—my heart is buried in

yours, I have reared you that you might be glorified at last among the saints and martyrs—no, no, you will go—see! I implore!"

"Oh, my father you make terrible the anguish of this moment."

"I warn you by all the sacred obligations of your holy order against this fatal step."

"Father, though it be fatal, I must take it. Bless me and let me go in peace!"

"Bless you? Bless you? Do this and I hurl upon you the awful curse of the everlasting Church!"

Father Palemon staggered as though struck in the forehead. For a moment only the convulsive breathing of the abbot broke the silence of the great chamber. Then Father Palemon knelt, kissed the hem of the abbot's cowl, and, turning, went out.

* * * * * * * *

Years later a man waited in the great reception-room of the abbot. His head dropped heavily forward on his breast, and his empty hands hung listless. The abbot entered.

"I do not know you."

"I am Father Palemon."

"There—is—no Father Palemon.

"Oh, my father! Do you receive me so!"

He started forward. His long hair unkempt matted over his forehead; his face, pinched and old with suffering, was ashen gray, except for red spots on his cheeks. Deep shadows lay under his blood-shot, restless eyes.

"I have come back to be a monk again. Will you receive me?"

"Receive you until what time? Until next June?"

"Until death."

"Until death I have received you once already."

"I beseech you. I am ill. I am in trouble. The new life in the world has come to end. Father Abbot, she is dead."

"Men who once break their holiest pledges for love's sake, again will break them, if they love again. You are in the world, remain there."

"This is the house of God, and you close its doors against me!"

"You passed them of your own self-will—Oh, my son, my son, what have I done!"

For Father Palemon had reeled and fallen fainting in the doorway.

* * * * * * * *

Later into the awful death-chamber of the abbey they bore him, in the last hour readmitted to the fellowship of his order.

Stretched upon his white cowl, his cold feet just touching the earth stains upon its hem, he lay quite still. Finally, half rising, he sought among the folds for the tiny blood stain. Pressing his cheek against it, he lay down and breathed out his spirit in a faint whisper—

"Madeline!"

MISTAKEN PRAYERS.

("THE RAINMAKERS.")

FRANK L. STANTON.

LORD, we've been a-prayin' for rain
Not to flood the valley an' drown the plain;
We knowed you'd send it when you seen fit,
But we got in a hurry, an' prayed for it!
En it jest come down
On the hill and town,
Till we've all got ready, good Lord, to drown!

Lord, forgive us if we complain,
We thought we wuz 'pinted to run the rain,
But we've 'bout decided, from spring to fall,
We don't know nuthin', Lord, at all!
We sing an' sigh
To the clouds on high:
"What we wuz needin', good Lord, wuz—dry!"

THE TEACHER'S SLEIGH RIDE.

SALLY PRATT McLEAN GREENE.

ONE morning, ere we had breakfasted at the Ark, Noel Norris, like some new-fangled orb of day, was seen to surmount the ruddy verge of the horizon. He bore a gun on his shoulders and advanced with a singularly martial and self-confident tread.

As he entered the Ark, he placed the gun against the wall, sat down, folded his arms and looked as if he *could* be brave without it.

"Well, Grandma," he said, with a determined gaze fixed straight before him on vacuity, "mother and father have gone to Aunt Larcia's, I suppose to spend a week, I—ahem!—suppose so."

"You don't say so, Noel! And what will poor Robin do now, Noel? What will poor Robin do now?"

"Yes," he said gravely, "that's what *they* thought—ahem! *They* thought they should stay a week, *they* thought so certainly."

"Wall, I declare for't, Noel, now's the time you'd ought to have a wife. Jest think how comf-table 'twould be for ye now instead of stayin' there all alone, if ye only had a nice little wife to cook for ye, and watch for ye, and keep ye company, an'—"

"I think so," exclaimed Noel, giving a quick glance backward in the direction of his gun, "*I* think so. *I* do."

"Lookin' for game? Eh! Noel?" inquired Grandpa.

"Pa," said Grandma solemnly, "I wish you'd put another stick of wood on the stove."

But the guileless Noel interpreted not the deeper meaning of Grandpa's words.

"I think some of it, Capt'n," he answered unsmilingly. "It's been —ahem!—it's been a very mild winter on the—ahem!—I should say on the Cape. It's been a very mild winter on the Cape, Miss Hungerford!"

Noel's nervous glance falling again on the gun took me in mildly on the way.

I had been directing some letters which I had an opportunity of sending that morning.

"I beg your pardon," I said looking up, "yes, you don't often have such mild winters, Mr. Norris."

"No'm, we don't, not very often. Quite a—ahem!—quite a little fall of snow we had last night, Miss Hungerford."

"Any deer tracks? Eh! Noel?" asked Grandpa.

"Pa," said Grandma, "I wish you'd fill the tea-kettle. Seems to me she smells sorter dry."

"Well, Captain, I saw more rabbit tracks; did—ahem!—yes, I saw more rabbit tracks. I don't suppose they ever do such a thing where you live as go—ahem!—go sleigh-riding; now, do they, Miss Hungerford?"

"Why, yes. They always do in winter. I remember splendid times we used to have."

"Pa," said Grandma, going into the kitchen, "I wish you'd come out here a minute. I want to speak to you."

I then observed that Noel's chair had been drawn into frightfully close proximity to the gun.

"I—I think it's pleasanter—that is, I—I sometimes think it's warmer for two in a sleigh than—'tis for one, now don't you, Miss Hungerford? Now, I think of it, you—you wouldn't think of such a thing as going to ride with me, now, now would you, Miss Hungerford?"

"Why—if you are kind enough to invite me, Mr. Norris."

"I think so," said Noel, becoming immediately pale, though composed. "Yes'm, I think so, certainly I do."

"Thank you, I will go with pleasure."

"Thank *you*, Miss Hungerford; I wish you a pleasant day, I do—with pleasure, and I hope that nothing will happen to prevent;" and Noel marched back across the fields as valiantly as a man might who on occasions of doubt and peril took the precaution to go suitably armed.

Noel came very early and preferred to wait outside until I had finished my supper. Then I donned my sealskin coat, gathered up my skirts, and smiling up at Mr. Norris was not surprised to hear him remark, "Ahem! I think so, certainly, yes, I do."

Noel's was the only sleigh in Wallencamp, and, as he informed me,

was one he, himself, had constructed. It had, indeed, suggested the workings of no ordinary intellect. Its most impressive features were its lowness and its height. The general lowness of the body into which one could step easily—the floor being covered with straw, suggestive of mice—and the height to which it rose in the back. Half way down this imposing structure the arms or wings sprouted out, giving to the whole the appearance of an immense bird, and effectually shutting in the occupants of the sleigh from the contemplation of any possible chances of scenery. The seat being so low, the horse seemed abnormally high. It was a white horse, and there seemed something awful in the motions of its legs.

The red of sunset had not gone out of the sky when we started, and a pale, young moon was getting up in the heavens, but we could see neither fading sky, nor rising moon, nor rock, nor trees, nor snowy expanse. Nothing but the gigantic hoof-falls of our phantom steed.

Being thus hopelessly debarred from any communication with nature, and fearing to give myself up to my thoughts, I endeavored to engage my companion in lively and cheerful converse by the way. But, he was in a position of actual physical suffering, for the reins were too short to form a happy connecting link between him and the horse, and whenever the ghostly quadruped made a plunge forward Noel was thrust violently down into the straw, and throughout all this he composed himself with such firm and hopeless dignity that with the respect due to suffering, I was forced to witness the struggle with silent commiseration.

Once, having kept his seat for a longer time than usual, Noel said:

"I'll give you a riddle, Miss Hungerford. Ahem! Why does a hen go around the road?"

I posed my head in an attitude of deep thought.

"Because," Noel hastened to say, "because she can't go across. No, that isn't right, why—ahem!—why does a hen go *across* the road, Miss Hungerford?" and the next instant he was wallowing in the straw at my feet.

"Because," I ventured, when he reappeared again, "because she can't go around it."

"You—you've heard it before," gravely protested Noel.

"I confess," I said, "that I have. It used to be my favorite riddle.'

"It—it used to be mine, too; it *used* to be, Miss Hungerford. You couldn't tell what I was thinking of when I started from home to-night, now, could you, Miss Hungerford?"

"I'm sure I couldn't, Mr. Norris, but I hope it was something very agreeable."

"It wasn't, that is, not very, Miss Hungerford, not very. I was —I was—ahem!—I was thinking of getting married."

"I hope that as you consider the subject longer it will be a less painful one to you."

"I hope so, Miss Hungerford. I hope so, certainly." But there was little of that sanguine quality expressed in his tone.

"What should you think, now, Miss Hungerford, if I should speak of such a thing as that to—to *you*, now, Miss Hungerford?"

"I should think you were very inconsiderate and would probably regret your rashness afterwards."

"I think so; certainly, yes, I do." After this it seemed that a weight had been lifted from Noel's mind. He kept his seat better. His was not a buoyant spirit, but there was on this occasion an air of repressed cheerfulness about him.

After a while he asked: "Would you mind if I was to sing a little, Miss Hungerford; would you mind if I was to sing a little?"

And I remember he sang all the way home.

"Dare to be a Daniel,
Dare to stand *alone*;
Dare to have a purpose firm,
Dare to make it known."

KEYNOTES.

Keynote of good breeding: B natural.
Keynote of wisdom: C sharp.
Keynote of stupidity: A flat.
Keynote of shrewdness: B sharp.
Keynote of youth: A minor.
Keynote of an army officer: A major.
Keynote of the driver: G.

ATTACK AT ZARILA.

OUIDA.

[Cutting from "Under Two Flags," by E. V. Sheridan.]

[Birtie Cecil, known as Louis Victor, is in command of a squadron of chasseurs in the French army in Africa. He is an English noble who, bearing the burden of a crime of which he is innocent, has left his country and is there believed to be dead. In Africa he is a French soldier, and is beloved by Cigarette, the vivandiere of the French army. Cecil, at the head of his regiment, is about to be cut down by Arabs, when the day is saved by Cigarette.]

THE Arabs had surprised the French encampment where it lay in the center of an arid plain that was called Zarila. Hovering like a cloud of hawks, on the entrance of the Sahara, massed together for one mighty if futile effort, with all their ancient war-lust, and with a new despair, the tribes who refused the yoke of the alien empire were once again in arms.

The fight had raged all day. There had been a lull at night, and now in early dawn with the whir like the noise of an eagle's wings and a swoop like an eagle's seizure, the Arabs again whirled down upon them, met a few yards in advance by the answering charge of the Light Cavalry.

There was a crash as if rock were hurled upon rock, as the chasseurs, scarce seated in saddle, rushed forward. Out of the caverns of the night an armed multitude poured. A moment ago they had slept in security; now thousands on thousands were thrown on them in hosts, which the encircling cloud of dust served but to render vaster. The Arab line stretched out with wings that seemed to extend on and on without end; the line of the chasseurs was not one-half its length; they were but a single squadron flung in their stirrups, scarcely clothed, knowing only that the foe was upon them, caring only that their sword-hands were hard on their weapons.

"En avant, mes freres! France! France! France!" It was Cecil's voice, their leader.

"Suivez—moi!" he shouted, the Eagle held high. Like arrows launched they charged.

Dense bodies of Arabs parted them in the front from the camp where the battle raged, harassed them in the rear with flying shots and hurled lances, and forced down on them on either side like the closing jaws of a trap. The impetuosity of their onward movement bore headlong all before it. For the moment the Bedouins gave way, shaken and confused. Well they knew Cecil, and wherever the "fair Frank," as they called him, came, there they knew the battle was hard to win. Yet, though the French horses forced through a bristling forest of steel, though the remnant of the once glittering squadron was cast against them in as headlong a daring as if it had half the regiments of the Empire at its back, the charge availed little against the hosts of the desert that rallied and swooped down afresh.

Cecil's men could scarcely see his face in the red mist of combat, but his voice rose clear.

"En avant, mes freres! France! France! France!" The Arabs closed in on every side, wheeling, striking, hemming in beyond escape the doomed fragment of the Frankish squadron driven close together, a ring of horsemen, each with his face to the foe: a solid circle wedged one against the other, with the bodies of chargers and of men deep around them, and with the ground soaked with blood till the sand was one red morass.

Cecil held the Eagle still, and looked round on the few left to him.

"You are the sons of the Old Guard; die like them."

They answered with a pealing cry of assent and triumph, awaiting their butchery.

There was a pause, brief as is the pause of the lungs to take a fuller breath.

The chief of the Arabs pressed back his savage throng.

"You are great warriors," he cried, "surrender; we will spare!"

Cecil raised the Eagle where the wings should glisten in the fuller day. Half naked, scorched, blinded, with an open gash in his shoulder where the lance had struck, his eyes were clear as they flashed with the light of the sun in them; his mouth smiled as he answered:

"Have we shown ourselves cowards, that we shall yield?" With a yell as of wild beasts in their famine, the Arabs threw themselves

forward. Above the din, the shouts, the tumult, a voice like a silver trumpet rang:

"En avant! En avant! Tue, tue, tue!"

Down into the midst, the tricolor waving above her head, the bridle of her fiery mare between her teeth, her pistol leveled in deadly aim, rode Cigarette.

Lightning fire of the crossing swords played round her, glitter of lances dazzled her eyes, reek of smoke and of carnage was round her; but she dashed into the heart of the conflict laughing, shouting, waving her torn colors, her curls blowing back in the breeze, and her bright young face set in the warrior's lust. Behind her, by scarcely a length, galloped three squardons of chasseurs and Spahis, trampling headlong over the corpse-strewn field, and breaking through the masses of the Arabs as though they were seas of corn.

"To the charge again! Tue! tue! tue!"

Cigarette had saved the day and Cecil.

THREE LITTLE CHESTNUTS.

THREE little chestnuts lying on the ground—
At least, so the story's told,—
The first said, "Ah!" and the second said, "Oh!"
And the third said, "Ee! Ain't it cold!"

Three little chestnuts crowded in a pail,
Then thrust in a boiling pot,—
The first said, "Ah!" and the second said, "Oh!"
And the third said, "Ee! Aint' it hot!"

Three little chestnuts seized by naughty Sam,
Who swallowed them all for a lark,—
The first said, "Ah!" and the second said, "Oh!"
And the third said, "Ee! Ain't it dark!"

ORCHESTRA CHAIR X 13.

HOWARD FIELDING.

THE train from New York, due at Bridgeport at 6:20 P.M., ran into the station a few minutes late. From the rear platform of the last car there alighted a tall young man who wore a long, dark gray raincoat, with the collar turned up. His hat was pulled well down over his forehead. As he dodged around the end of the depot, Mr. Kent, a reporter on one of the Bridgeport papers, thought "that fellow looks queer."

The stranger crossed the street in a great hurry and entered the bar of a hotel. Kent gained the bar in another way, almost simultaneously with the newcomer.

The man took his place by a window and observed with anxiety the crowd which poured out of the depot. The light from an electric lamp beat strongly upon his face, revealing to Kent that he was naturally of a fair complexion, though he seemed to be dark because his eyebrows were penciled and his mustache blackened. Obviously the disguise had been hastily assumed.

Presently the stranger became satisfied with what he had seen. He turned away and walked across the street into the restaurant which is in the depot. Few people were eating there, but it seemed that they were too many for the man in the raincoat, and he was about to go away when he observed a flight of stairs leading up to another dining-room on the second floor. Five minutes later, when Kent ascended the stairs, he beheld the stranger sitting in a corner with a newspaper held up before his face. Not counting two waitresses and a cashier, there was nobody else in the room except Detective Cyrus Field Bond, who always ate in that room at that hour. The detective was a man of regular habits. He would finish his dinner at 7:30 precisely, he would smoke a short cigar, and then he would go to a theater and occupy a seat on the center aisle in the last row of the orchestra.

Kent sat down in a corner and ordered some dinner. The waitress who served him was a nice girl, but very loquacious, so much so that

Kent felt obliged to warn her in a whisper not to say anything that should reveal the nature of his occupation.

"I guess there must be something doing this evening," said the girl, glancing at the stranger out of the corner of her eye. "Mr. Bond gave me the same advice."

Presently the passenger from New York called a messenger-boy and sent him out upon an errand.

"He sent the boy up to the Park Theater to buy a ticket," the waitress whispered to Kent. "He said that he wanted it in the last row of the orchestra."

"Can this be a 'fly cop' from New York?" Kent asked himself. "Have he and Bond got something up? Do they expect to nab somebody in the theater?"

The messenger-boy returned with the ticket after a considerable delay, during which the stranger seemed nervous.

It was ten minutes before eight when Bond left the restaurant and he went no farther than the room below, where he leaned against the cigar-stand and conversed with the man behind it. He had not been there long, when the mysterious stranger paid his check and departed from the depot, quietly attended by Kent, who walked on the other side of the street.

There was a considerable crowd about the entrance of the theater. It was the night of a "first production upon any stage," and both the play and the company had been well advertised in advance.

Kent secured an admission ticket and made his way inside. He found the unknown seated in the last row of the orchestra, still clad in the raincoat and with the collar turned up around his neck. In the aisle seat of that same line of chairs sat Detective Bond, and it flashed across Kent's mind that if the two men had desired to exchange a few words in such a manner as to attract no attention, they would have had an excellent opportunity when the stranger passed Bond on the way to his seat.

The stranger was in chair X 13, the sixth seat from Bond's, which was X 1. Of the five seats intervening Nos. 3, 5, and 7 were occupied by people who were known to Kent. Nos. 9 and 11 were vacant, and, though Kent knew that the tickets must have been sold, he beheld

the places still empty when the house was darkened and the curtain rose. Almost immediately, as if they had been waiting for a signal, two persons appeared, an elderly man and a young and very pretty woman, both strangers in Bridgeport. They were ushered into the waiting chairs. As they passed Bond the reporter saw no sign of recognition, but the stranger betrayed himself. He pulled up his collar a little farther on the side toward them and turned his head so that no clear view of his face could be had. Later he assumed a position with his right elbow on the arm of his chair and his hand sheltering his visage.

The young lady was next to the man in the raincoat, and seemed to be entirely oblivious of his presence. She kept her attention fixed on the stage, and seemed to take a very deep interest in the performance, whispering frequently to the elderly man beside her, as if making comments and criticisms. The man in the raincoat seemed to be listening secretly.

At the close of the first act, when the lights in the house were turned up, the man in the raincoat sank down still farther into his chair and effaced himself with even greater caution. Presently, to Kent's surprise, Detective Bond arose and strolled out of the auditorium. He went to the smoking-room downstairs, and Kent ventured to follow him. No one else was there.

"Hello!" said Bond as the reporter entered. "What do you think of the play?"

"Blast the play!" replied Kent. "I've got something else on my mind."

"Have, eh?" was the response. "Well, so have I."

"Now, look here, Cyrus Bond," said Kent earnestly, "I've always used you well, and you've always found me square. I've never given away anything you've told me till you've said that I could. Isn't that so? Well, such being the case, I ask you to let me in on this game that's going on to-night."

"Game!"

"Who's that fellow in the raincoat?"

"Blamed if I know. Only wish I did, for I'm of your opinion, my boy. There's something up. I caught on to that man at the station

He's disguised, and he's mighty anxious to escape observation. He knows those people next to him, and I don't. They came up on the 5:15 train, and they were 'on the quiet'."

"What do you make of it?"

"If I was to give a guess," said Bond, "I'd say that that fellow was young Blaisdell, the man who turned the trick at that New York bank the other day, and that the other two are relatives, his father and sister, perhaps. They look a mighty sight like him. Have you caught on to that?"

"I have. But that fellow doesn't answer Blaisdell's description very well."

"He doesn't, and that's a fact. But I can't think of anybody else. And he's somebody; you can make up your mind to that."

"What are you going to do?"

"I'm going to keep him in sight"—

"He may be leaving at this moment."

"If he was, you'd see an usher coming down those stairs four at a jump. I've sent for a New York man who happens to be in Bridgeport and who knows Blaisdell, but it's a chance if he gets here before the performance is over. If he doesn't I'll try to hold this fellow somehow or follow him. You stand ready to help me, and I'll let you in on the story. We ought to go back now. I came down here just to see whether the fellow was 'on to me' and would try to get out."

They returned to the auditorium. Nothing of importance happened during the remainder of the performance. At the very last, Kent saw a man tiptoe down the aisle and lay a cautious hand on Bond's shoulder. Before Bond and the newcomer could exchange more than half a dozen words the play was over. There was a tempest of applause. The company was called out again and again. Kent worked his way down among the aisles until he was close behind the stranger. Meanwhile Bond and his acquaintance had sidled in so that they stood beside Kent. The climax of a real drama had arrived.

At this moment the stranger turned for the first time toward the elderly man and the girl who sat beside him. He had wiped the black from his eyebrows and mustache, and the change in his appearance was simply amazing. Kent stared at him, oblivious of everything else.

The pretty girl uttered a sound that seemed to combine a cry of terror with a burst of hysterical laughter.

"Harry! Harry! You here? It can't be."

At this the elderly man wheeled as if he had been struck a blow.

"S-S-s-h, for the love of heaven!" whispered the young man. "I promised Millie solemnly that I wouldn't come. She'd have fallen in a faint on the stage if she had known that I was in the house. But—but I couldn't stay away. My own first play, and my wife in the leading part! That's too much to ask of any man, isn't it, dad?"

"Well, less than that was too much to ask of us," replied his father. "We promised Millie that we wouldn't come, as you know, but we sneaked down here"—

"Sneaked!" echoed the author. "Why, I came in disguise, and I crept around like a criminal. I was afraid some blamed fool would see me on the street and tell Millie. But she'll forgive me after such a success."

Detective Bond laid a hand on Kent's shoulder and whispered in his ear.

"Which of us," he asked, "is the blamed fool mentioned by our mysterious friend?"

A SECRET.

WE stood alone upon the deck one night,
The moon had spread a flood of silver light
Upon the rippling waves. We neither spoke,
For neither wished the enchanting reverie broke.
We watched the waters dance around the keel
And saw the waves that made the steamer reel.
I dared not say the words I would, for fear
Her dimpled hand might fall upon my ear.
Had you been there your words would have been plenty,
But you know well we all are fools at twenty;
And I was one, so there in bliss I tarried;—
What did I do? No matter now, we're married.

"GENTLEMEN! THE KING!"

ROBERT BARR.

THE room was large but with a low ceiling. At one end of the apartment stood a gigantic fireplace, in which was heaped a pile of blazing logs, whose light illuminated the faces of the twenty men who sat within. The night was a stormy and tempestuous one, the rain lashing wildly against the windows. The hunting chalet stood in a wilderness near the confines of the kingdom of Alluria, twelve leagues from the capital, and was the property of Count Staumn, whose tall, gaunt form stood erect at the head of the table as he silently listened to the discussion which every moment was becoming more and more heated.

"I tell you," thundered Baron Brunfels, "I will not have the king killed. I am a conspirator, but not an assassin."

"It is not assassination, but justice," said the ex-chancellor, suavely.

"Justice!" cried the baron. "You have learned that cant word in the cabinet of the king himself, before he thrust you out."

"If the king escapes he will take up his abode in a neighboring territory, and there will inevitably follow plots and counterplots for his restoration; thus Alluria will be kept in a constant state of turmoil."

"Argument," said Count Staumn, "is ever the enemy of good comradeship. Let us settle the point at once, and finally, with the dice-box. Let us throw for the life of the king. I, as chairman of this meeting, will be umpire. Single throws, and the highest number wins. Baron Brunfels, you will act for the king, and if you win may bestow upon the monarch his life. Ex-Chancellor Steinmetz stands for the state. If he wins, then is the king's life a forfeit. Gentlemen, are you agreed?"

"Agreed, agreed," cried the conspirators.

The ex-chancellor took the dice-box in his hand, and was about to shake when there suddenly came three stout raps against the door, given apparently with the hilt of a sword. Many not already standing

started to their feet, and nearly all looked one upon another with deep dismay in their glances. The full company of conspirators were present. The knocking was repeated, accompanied by the words:

"Open, I beg of you."

Count Staumn left the table and stealthily as a cat approached the door.

"Who is there?" he asked.

"A wayfarer, weary and wet, who seeks shelter from the storm."

"My house is already filled. I have no room for another."

"Open the door peacefully, and do not put me to the necessity of forcing it."

There was a ring of decision in the voice which sent quick pallor to more than one cheek. Ex-Chancellor Steinmetz rose to his feet with terror in his eyes and chattering teeth. Count Staumn looked over his shoulder at the assemblage.

"What am I to do?"

"Open, count, and let the insistent stranger in. Whether he leave the place alive or no, there are twenty men here to answer."

The count undid the fastenings, and through the open door, there entered a tall man, completely enveloped in a dark cloak that was dripping wet. Drawn over his eyes was a hunter's hat of felt. The door was immediately barred behind him, and the stranger flung off his cloak; then he removed his hat with a sweep, His Majesty, Rudolph, King of Alluria.

If the king had any suspicion of his danger he gave no token of it. His clear, honest eyes swept the company.

"My Lord of Brunfels, I see that I have interrupted you at your old pleasure of dicing. While requesting to continue your game as though I had not joined you, may I venture to hope the stakes you play for are not high?"

Every one held his breath.

"Your Majesty," said Baron Brunfels, "the stakes are the highest that a gambler may play for."

"You tempt me, baron, to guess that the hazard is a man's life. Whose life is in the cast, my Lord of Brunfels?"

Before the baron could reply, Ex-Chancellor Steinmetz rose;

"I beg your gracious permission to explain the reason our gathering—"

"Herr Steinmetz, when I desire your interference I shall call for it; and remember this, Herr Steinmetz, the man who begins a game must play it to the end, even though he finds luck running against him."

The ex-chancellor sat down again and drew his hand across his damp forehead.

"Your Majesty," spoke up the baron, a ring of defiance in his voice, "I speak not for my comrades, but for myself. I begin no game I am afraid to finish. We were about to dice in order to discover whether your Majesty should live or die."

A simultaneous moan seemed to rise from the assembled traitors. The king smiled.

"Baron, I have ever chided myself for loving you, for you were always a bad example to weak and impressionable natures. Even when your overbearing, obstinate intolerance compelled me to dismiss you from the command of my army, I could not but admire your sturdy honesty. But we have had enough of comedy, and now tragedy sets in. Those who are traitors to their ruler must not be surprised if a double traitor is one of their number. Why am I here? Why do two hundred mounted and armed men surround this doomed chalet? Miserable wretches, what have you to say that judgment be not instantly passed upon you?"

"I have this to say," roared Baron Brunfels, drawing his sword, "that whatever may befall this assemblage, you, at least, shall not live to boast it."

The king stood unmoved; but Count Staumn and others threw themselves between the baron and his victim.

"My Lord of Brunfels," said the king calmly, "sheathe your sword. Your ancestors have often drawn it, but always for, and never against, the occupant of a throne. Now, gentlemen, hear my decision, and abide faithfully by it. Seat yourselves at the table, ten on each side, the dice-box between you. You shall not be disappointed, but shall play out the game of life and death. Each dices with his opposite. He who throws the highest number escapes. He who throws the lowest, places his weapons on the empty chair, and stands against

yonder wall to be executed for the traitor that he is. Thus half of your company shall live, and the other half shall seek death with such courage as may be granted them. Do you agree, or shall I give the signal?"

With unanimous voice they agreed, all excepting Baron Brunfels, who spoke not.

"Come, baron, you and my devoted ex-chancellor were about to play when I came in. Begin the game."

"Very well," replied the baron, nonchalantly. "Steinmetz, the dice-box is near your hand; throw."

Some one placed the cubes in the leathern cup and handed it to the ex-chancellor, whose shivering fingers relieved him of the necessity of shaking the box. The dice rolled out on the table—a three, a four, and a one.

"Eight!" cried the king. "Now, baron."

Baron Brunfels carelessly threw the dice.

"Three sixes!" cried the baron. "If I only had such luck when I played for money!"

Steinmetz, struggling and pleading for mercy, was speedily overpowered and bound; then his captors placed him against the wall, and resumed their places at the table. The next man to be doomed was Count Staumn. The count rose from his chair, bowed to the king and to the assembled company, drew forth his sword, broke it over his knee, and walked to the wall of the condemned.

The remainder of the fearful contest was carried on in silence, but with great celerity, and before a quarter of an hour was past, ten men had their backs to the wall, while the remaining ten were seated at the table.

Baron Brunfels shifted uneasily in his seat, and glanced with compassion at his sentenced comrades.

"Your Majesty," he said, "I am always loath to see a coward die. The whimperings of your former chancellor annoy me; therefore, will I gladly take his place, and give to him the life and liberty you perhaps design for me, if, in exchange, I have the privilege of speaking my mind regarding you and your precious kingship."

"Unbind the valiant Steinmetz," said the king. "Speak your mind freely, Baron Brunfels."

"Your Majesty, backed by brute force, has condemned to death ten of your subjects. You have branded us as traitors, and such we are, and so find no fault with your sentence. You have reminded me that my ancestors fought for yours, and they never turned their swords against their sovereign. Why, then, have our swords been pointed toward your breast? Because, King Rudolph, you are yourself a traitor. You belong to the ruling class, and have turned your back upon your order. You have shorn nobility of its privileges, and for what?"

"And for what?" echoed the king. "For this: that the ploughman on the plain may reap what he has sown; that taxation may be light; that my nobles should deal honestly with the people and not use their position for thievery and depredation; that those whom the state honors by appointing to positions of trust shall content themselves with the recompense lawfully given and refrain from speculation; that peace and security shall rest on the land; that the kingdom of Alluria may live in amity with its neighbors. This is the task I set myself when I came to the throne. What fault have you to find with the program, my Lord Baron?"

"The simple fault that it is the program of a fool. In following it you have gained the resentment of your nobles and have not even received the thanks of the ploughmen of the valley, or the shepherds on the hills. Your are hated in cot and castle alike. You would not stand in your place for a moment were not an army behind you. Being a fool, you think of the common people alone, whereas they only curse that they have not a share in the thieving."

The king, whose gaze had been fixed upon the floor before him, drew a deep sigh, and when he looked up at them, his eyes were veiled with moisture.

"I thought until to-night that I had possessed some qualities, at least, of a ruler of men. I came here alone among you, and although there are brave men in this company, yet I had the ordering of events as I chose to order them, notwithstanding that odds stood a score to one against me. I still venture to think that whatever failures attended my eight years' rule in Alluria arose from faults of my own, and not through imperfections in the plan or want of appreciation in the people.

If it is disastrous for a king to act without the co-operation of his nobles, it is equally disastrous for them to plot against their leader. I beg to acquaint you with the fact that the insurrection so carefully prepared has broken prematurely out. My capital is in possession of the factions, who are industriously cutting each other's throats to settle which one of two smooth-tongued rascals shall be their president. While you were dicing to settle the fate of an already deposed king, and I was sentencing you to a mythical death, we were all alike being involved in common ruin. I have seen to-night more property in flames than all my saving during the last eight years would pay for. I have no horsemen at my back, and have stumbled here blindly, a much bedraggled fugitive, having lost my way in every sense of the phrase. And so I beg of the hospitality of Count Staumn another flagon of wine, and either a place of shelter for my patient horse, who has been left too long in the storm without, or else direction toward the frontier, whereupon my horse and I will set out to find it."

"Not toward the frontier!" cried Baron Brunfels, grasping his sword and holding it aloft, "but towards the capital! We will surround you, and hew for you a way back through that fickle mob, back to the throne of your ancestors."

A ringing cheer echoed to the timbered ceiling.

"The king! The king!" they cried.

Rudolph smiled and shook his head.

"Not so," he said. "I leave a thankless throne with a joy I find it impossible to express. As I sat on horseback, half-way up the hills above the burning city, and heard the clash of arms, I was filled with amazement to think that men would acutally fight for the position of ruler of the people. Whether the insurrection has brought freedom or not, the future alone will tell; but it has, at least, brought freedom to me. No man can question either my motives or my acts. Gentlemen, drink with me to the new president of Alluria, whoever he may be."

But the king drank alone, none other raising flagon to lip

Then Baron Brunfels cried aloud:

"Gentlemen, the King!"

And never in the history of Alluria was a toast so heartily honored.

MAKING OF THE CLIMAX.

ELIZABETH McCRACKEN.

[Words in parentheses may or may not be omitted.]

"THE climax fell perfectly flat; the fate of the play is in the climax; you have no idea how flat it fell—"

William's mother interposed; "Yes, Olivia, I have! But this isn't the village of Eatonburg; this is New York."

"Yes—that's just the point. If Eatonburg was disappointed and bored, what will New York be?"

"Don't talk like this two days before your first night in New York; I forbid it!" (said William's mother with affectionate firmness).

"Two days! I shall be here just two days more, William," (Olivia said, half playfully, half seriously to the little boy).

"Nonsense!" (exclaimed William's mother vehemently).

"May I come to see you both days?" (said William).

"Come to luncheon with me, to-morrow," Olivia said, smiling at him.

William and Olivia had been friends ever since that memorable time when, as in his gala-day finery he had shyly parted the portieres of the dining-room doorway and stood waiting to attract his mother's attention, Olivia looked up and smiled at him. William was only seven years old, but he had seen many beautiful ladies. He was accustomed to them, and usually he was not particularly interested in them; they talked about things he did not understand, and they kissed him, and altogether, he found them embarrassing.

But this one—none of the other beautiful ladies had been like her! She made William's heart quite thump against his side.

"This is my son, William," he heard his mother say; and true to habit, William put his small, sun-burned hand into Olivia's hand, and murmured, "How do you do?"

Olivia looked down at him and smiled again. "What a dear little boy," she exclaimed.

And this the was beginning of their friendship. Ordinarily, William remained at his mother's luncheons no longer that necessity demanded; but on that day he lingered, standing beside Olivia's chair, his hot little hand resting lightly on her shoulder. The other ladies appeared to be exceedingly amused, but he was unabashed. Olivia was so wonderful; he was utterly at ease in her presence; even his mother's half-smile did not disconcert him. He stood and looked up into her face with fearless, unself-conscious admiration and liking.

Olivia found herself taken by storm. She had been flattered and courted very nearly all her life, yet she was more touched and pleased by William than she had been even by sundry very ornate personages. And when she was leaving, and William earnestly invited her to come again—a great many times again—she smiled more enchantingly than before, and kissed him, and promised that she would. And so she had invited him to lunch alone with her the very last day before her first appearance on the New York stage.

William went as early as he could coax his mother into allowing.

"I'm glad nobody else is here," he said to Olivia, as he sat on the floor at her feet, his hands in her lap.

"Why?"

"'Cause there are some things I want to ask you; and I never can when people are 'round, 'cause they do all the talkin'."

"Well, dear, what things do you want to ask me?"

"What is a first night in New York?"

"It's the first performance of a new play, William."

"A play! What is a play?"

"My dearest boy! A play! It's something that people do in a theatre."

"Oh—in a theatre. Mother goes to the theatre, often; so does father, but they don't *do* anything, they see something; *I've* never been. Is it the play they see?"

"Yes, dear, and it is the play—some of it—that I *do*."

"Oh, which is better, seein' it, or doin' it?"

"Well,—I don't know, William, but I'd rather do it."

"I s'pose it's harder to do it, though."

"Why—yes, it is, but that doesn't make any difference."

"No, I s'pose it's like popin' corn."

"What!"

"Popin' corn. It's harder to pop it; you get all too hot, and your arms ache from shakin' the popper. But it's more fun than sittin' comfortable, and watchin' some one else pop it. *I'd* rather *do* it, any time. Isn't that the way you feel 'bout doin' the play?"

Olivia clasped him in her arms. "Exactly the way, William!"

"And what is the climax? I want to ask that, too. You said it fell—"

"You know how it is when the corn pops? That's a climax."

"It always pops—if it's good pop-corn," (William said, musingly).

"We must pop some together, some time," (Olivia said, absently).

"Oh! will you? that *would* be fun."

Olivia persuaded William's mother to bring him to her first night. "He may be my mascot," she said. So William sat in the box with his father and mother, clapsing a hugh bunch of pink roses in his hands. Olivia saw him the moment she stepped upon the stage and felt a trifle reassured.

The play was very gorgeous, but not many persons in the crowded theatre were especially interested. "Nothing but a strong climax can save it," William heard his father say. "And she says the climax is hopelessly weak," his mother replied gravely.

Suddenly a woman whom William recognized as the person who wrote Olivia's letters, appeared at the back of the box, and beckoned to his mother.

"William!" his mother called suddenly; and he went quickly to her side.

"One of the pages is ill—"

"And the princess wants me to be one instead," (William said, dreamily).

(His mother stared at him, and then laughed.) "Yes, she wants you to come and carry her train."

(William's eyes sparkled.) "I have always *knew* she was a princess, and I'd love to be her page. Can I begin right now?"

He was rushed through several dingy halls, and into a small room in which he found Olivia, dressed in a robe more radiant than any of

the others. He ran to her, and seized her velvet train. "Shall I hold it like this?" (he gasped breathlessly).

(Olivia found time to laugh.) "Yes, dear, take up my train, and hold it until I am standing on the platform of my throne; then drop it; and when I sit you sit, too, on the steps of the throne. That's all you have to do. Do you understand?"

"Yes, it's just the way it is in the fairy books."

He did *not* forget the instructions of his princess. He dropped her train the instant she stepped upon the platform of her throne; and when she seated herself in the gilded chair, he sat on the lowest of the steps, and looking up at her, smiled admiringly, adoringly just as he always did. To Olivia's surprise the audience laughed with pleased appreciation.

She talked to all the people in the throne-room except William; they monopolized Olivia, and gave him no chance to speak to her. Once she turned and smiled at him, and involuntarily, William arose, and going up the steps, stood beside her throne, his hand on her shoulder and his cheek against her arm.

His mother clutched his father's hand; a sudden quickening of interest made itself apparent in the audience. Olivia smiled down upon William, and he did not see the man coming, the man with the long knife and the wicked face, until the man bounded up the steps, to the throne, and pointed the knife at Olivia, who sprang to her feet, trembling and frightened, grasping her throne with one hand, and the jewels of her dress with the other. She was too terrified to speak; her smile faded away, her lovely eyes opened wide with helpless fear.

This was the climax, but William did not know it. He only knew that the wicked man meant to hurt Olivia with the long knife. His rosy cheeks became white; all Olivia's terror and anguish were reflected in his baby face. He gave a heart-broken cry that resounded through the theatre, and flung himself in the way of the wicked man.

"You shan't," he shouted in his sweet, high voice, "you shan't hurt her!" He threw his arms around Olivia's waist, and looked over his shoulder at the man with the long knife. He was pale and frightened, but he was angry, too, and defiant, and determined to protect his beautiful princess. "How dare you? How can you? (his voice breaking).

How *can* you want to hurt her, *her*, when she is so—so—so—just what she *is*?"

A big sob quite choked him. To his intense relief, some soldiers caught the wicked man, and held him, and took away the long knife. Then there was a great noise. William raised his wet eyes to Olivia's face. Her face no longer had the frightened look, but it had another look so amazed, so grateful, so tender, that it quite overcame William's last vestiges of self-control. He hid his face on Olivia's velvet and jewels, and shook with sobs. Olivia bent over him, and kissed him, and soothed him and all the time the great noise continued.

The curtain went down, but still the noise did not stop. Olivia dried William's tears, unclapsed his arms from about her waist, and led him down the steps of the throne. All the other people left the throne-room; and then the curtain went up again; and down and up more times than William could count. Each time, Olivia held his hand, and smiled, and the last time, she whispered to him to throw a kiss to his mother. He obeyed, and again there was a great noise.

The following afternoon Olivia went to William's home to pop corn with him.

PREACHER PREFERRED SPOT CASH.

THE knot was tied; the pair were wed,
And then the smiling bridegroom said
Unto the preacher, "Shall I pay
To you the usual fee to-day,
Or would you have me wait a year
And give you then a hundred clear,
If I should find the marriage state
As happy as I estimate?"
The preacher lost no time in thought
To his reply no study brought,
There were no wrinkles on his brow;
Said he, "I'll take $3.00 now."

MADONNA OF THE TUBS.

ELIZABETH STUART PHELPS.

HENRY and Ellen Jane Salt had quarreled; but the worst of it was that they quarreled the night that Henry set sail for the Grand Banks of Newfoundland.

And because they were man and wife, and more to each other than all the world besides, they said each to each, what neither would have said to friend or neighbor for very shame's sake.

"There is something always wrong about this house, curse it?" cried the man whom William X. Salt had treated.

"There's nothing wrong in this house but him that's settin' sail from it," cried the woman whom the man had scolded.

They were flashing words—up and out and over—at another time a sob and a kiss would have met above the ashes of the sorry scene, and there would have been an end, and peace to it.

But the Abby E. Salt weighed anchor at eight o'clock. It was quarter past seven when Henry pushed back from the half-eaten supper and took up his old hat to go. He bade the children good-by sullenly, kissed Rafe, and, after an instant's hesitation, pushed open the door. He said he must hunt up Job Ely, and saying no more than this, he went out of the house. He did not look at his wife.

Her pretty, weary face had flushed a dangerous scarlet during the scene which had passed. Now it turned a dreadful white. The baby and the other baby began to cry; Rafe got upon his crutch and hobbled to the door; the wife alone stood quite still.

The wind, rising fiercely from the north, clutched at the half-open door and closed it noisily. For the instant, the master of the house seemed to have been slammed out by hands within.

"Let me by, Rafe; let me by this minute!" The wife made one bound and down the wooden steps, where she stood bewildered. No one was to be seen. It was deadly dark, and the wind raved with a

volume of sound which seemed to the Fairharbor woman, born and nourished of the blast, to be something intelligent and infernal pitted against her. She flung her shrill voice out into it: "Henry! Henry! come back and say good-by to me. I'm sorry. Henry! Henry! I'm sorry! I'm sorry!"

But only the awful throat of the gale made answer. She ran a little way, straining her ears, her eyes, her voice, calling passionately, plaintively, then passionately again; and despairing, for she made no headway against the roar of the November nor'wester, staggered, turned, and stopped.

At this moment a little figure hit her, hurrying by upon a little crutch.

"I'm goin' to catch my fa-ther," said Rafe.

He pushed on beyond her, his bright hair blown straight from his forehead, calling as he went, slipping, daring, tumbling on the sharp rocks, and up again. Down there in the dark she saw a little fellow stop to gather strength and throw the whole force of his young voice like a challenge to the gale:

"Fa-ther! marm's sorry! (Don't you cry, marm. I *think* he'll answer.) Fa-ther! fa-ther! marm's sorry! (Just keep still, marm. I'm *sure* he'll answer.) FA-THER! MARM'S SORRY!"

The crippled child hurled the whole of his little soul and body into that last cry, and then she saw him turn and limp, more slowly, back.

He came up to her gently where she stood sobbing in the dark, and as if he had been the parent, and she the child, he patted her upon the hand.

"I told you I'd catch him, marm—*dear* marm," added Rafe.

She shook her head incredulously, turning drearily to go back.

"But I caught my fa-ther," persisted Rafe. "He says, says he—"

"Rafe, he couldn't, dear."

"Marm, he hollered, 'So be I.'"

"Did your father say that, honest, Rafe?"

"I think he did. I says, 'Fa-ther, marm's sorry;' and he says, 'So be I.'"

"If he says, 'So be I,' God bless you, Rafe! mother's sonny boy."

"I think he did, *I think* my fa-ther hollered, 'So be I.'" He lifted the truthful face of an angel to the poor Madonna in the glimmer of the open door. He would have given his scrap-book just then to say, "I know he did." But Rafe never lied. The other children supposed it was because he was a cripple.

"At the Grand Banks, Henry Salt and Job Ely, of Fairharbor, dorymates, set out from the schooner Abby E. Salt to look after their trawls, and were lost in the fog. No hope is any longer felt of their safety. The bodies have not been recovered. Salt leaves a wife and six children. Ely was unmarried."

Miss Ritter, idly nibbling at her Daily Advertiser before her open fire, one bleak December morning, chanced upon this paragraph, which she reread and pondered long. Ellen Jane had sent no word out of her misery, poor thing! "I'd rather do a day's washing any time than write a letter," she used to say. Besides, what would the "boarder lady" care? Henry Salt had gone the way of his calling, like other men; his wife, like other women, was a "Fairharbor widow," and must bend to her fate. She bowed to it in those first weeks in a stupefaction that resembled moral catalepsy.

And so to Fairharbor as to Beacon Street, to Ellen Salt as to Helen Ritter, the holidays came gently or cruelly, but surely, on; and it was the day before Christmas, and going to snow.

As Christmas Eve drew on, they were all well in the house. Mrs. Salt drew the curtains fast, for the house was cold. Rafe asked her to leave one of the kitchen curtains up a little; he had a fancy for looking out on dark nights. Before his father died, Rafe sang 'Pull for the Shore" a great deal, standing by that window looking out: but he did not sing it any more.

The outside door did not latch—the one that slammed poor Henry out on that last night; there was no man to fix it now: Rafe had pushed the wash-bench finally against it to keep it in its place.

Mrs. Salt looked about the little group, trying to smile. She had on a dyed black dress; she looked sixty years old. There was something no less than dreadful in the mechanical gentleness and reserve which had settled down upon this emotional creature. The crossest baby never raised a ruffle in her accent. Her children could not

remember to have had even a rebuke from her since that night when the neighbor woman came in with the news. They had deserved it twenty times.

"Children, I haven't any presents for you this Christmas. It's the first one, I guess. I can't help it, you know, my dears. We are very poor to-night. But I'll build you a big, hot fire—won't that do? Won't that be better than no Christmas at all? I thought mebbe it would. It's all mother's got for you. She couldn't do any better. She wanted to. He always set so much by Christmas. He—"

The broken door blew in and slammed against the wash-bench loudly. And with it a huge object was thrust along the floor noisily enough.

"It's the expressman!" cried Rafe. "It's Tan and Salt's express cart, for *us*, marm!"

Now the Salt family had never had an express package in all their lives. They gathered like bees about the box, which the driver lifted in for them compassionately; even stopping to help start the cover.

"Seein' ye're only women folks—of a Christmas Eve. And never in my life did I see a woman could open a wooden box. Guess ye'd have to set on it all night if I didn't—and no man else to do for ye—"

But Tan and Salt's express checked himself, and departed hastily from the loosened cover and unfinished sentence, letting in a whirl of the now falling snow.

Now, in that box—what mystery! what marvel! Rafe thought it was like a fairy tale, that flannels and shoes, and a second-hand overcoat, and mittens, and a black blanket shawl, should land on the floor with flour and coffee and crackers, and a package of tea and sugar, and rubbers for Sue, and a turkey for Christmas dinner, and under all—stockings. Six pairs of stockings—brown, red, blue, green, gray, and white, each one filled to the knee with Santa Claus knew what—trifles to the giver, ecstasy to the child—all the way down to the baby, and the other baby.

And when the expressman was followed by the immensity of a smart Fairharbor hack rolling to the very door, and Rafe, pulling back the washbench again, let in Miss Helen Ritter, standing tall and splendid in her furs of silver-seal, it seemed quite what was to be

expected; and not one of the poor souls knew, which was the best of it, that the young lady had never done such a thing before in all her life. She had done it now in her own way, was it her heart that told her how? For her head was painfully uneducated in sociology. She had not a particle of training as a visitor to the poor. She was simply acquainted with her washwoman, and had approached her as she would any other acquaintance, according to the circumstances of the case.

But who stopped to think of views or instincts in the astounded cottage that Christmas Eve? Not Miss Ritter, flushed and brilliant, drawn down by children's fingers upon the kitchen floor among the Christmas litter. Not Rafe, who put up his pale face and kissed her, saying not a word. Not Sue, nor Tommy, nor the baby, nor the other baby, pulling off the veil which shielded the feathers of their visitor's dainty bonnet from the snow. Mrs. Salt came up to take her furlined cloak with a soft, "You'll be too warm, my dear." Not Mrs. Salt, stealing away by herself, silent, still, and changed, and strange—she had scarcely spoken. What ailed her? What would she? Where was she? Helen Ritter hesitated before the bereavement of her washwoman, but summoned heart at last and followed her.

Ellen Jane Salt was in her chilly parlor, crouched alone; she had got into a corner, bent over something, and when Miss Ritter came up she was half shocked to see that it was the black blanket shawl.

"I didn't know whatever I was to do for mournin' for him!" The woman looked up. "Miss Ritter, I hadn't nothin' to mourn for Henry in but this one old dress I dyed before my money went to Biram for the rent, and my cloak was a tan-color season before last, and my shawl was a striped shawl, with red betwixt, you know. And us without our coal in, me going mournin' for my husband half black, half colors, like a widow that was half glad and half sorry—my dear, it *hurt* me. And to think you should think of that, and send me of a Christmas Eve. Oh, my dear, I haven't cried before, but it's the understandin' me that breaks me up. Oh, don't notice me, don't mind me. I haven't cried since he was drowned; I haven't darst. Oh, don't

you touch me—oh, yes, you may. Oh, nobody has held me since he—Oh, I've *got* to cry."

"Come here and let me hold you, and tell me all about it."

"How *can* I tell you? Oh, it is such a dreadful thing to tell! Oh, my dear, it isn't his dyin'; it isn't that Henry is *dead.* If that was all, I'd be a blessed woman—me a widow, and them fatherless, and so poor—I'd be a blessed woman; and God be thanked, if it was only that my husband had *died!*

"We quarreled, Miss Ritter, that very last night, that very last minute. He says, 'there's always something wrong about this house!' and he cursed it; but he didn't mean it, poor fellow; he never meant it; for they must have treated him to the wharves to make him say a thing like that—you *know* they must; and I says, 'There's nothing wrong in this house but him that's settin' sail from it.' I says those words to him at the very last; and he—"

"Marm, I *told* him you was sorry." Rafe pulled her by the dyed black sleeve. "I think, I believe, I'm pretty *sure,* that my fa-ther told me, '*So be I.*'"

Helen Ritter drew the child into her free arm, for in that supreme moment the widowed wife seemed to have gone deaf and blind.

"What's death, if that was all, to man and wife that love each other? I've been cold since Henry died, and I've gone hungry—don't let on to the children, for they don't know—and I'd *be* cold and hungry; and if I was to starve, what's that? And if I mourned and cried for him, us partin' kind, why, what is that? It's the words between us! oh, it's the words between us! I dream 'em in my dreams, I hear 'em in the wind, I hear 'em when the children sing, and we loved each other, and we come to words that last, last minute, him goin' to his death! Oh, my God!

"Miss Ritter, dear, what am I sayin'? Send the children off. Cryin', Rafe? Don't, dear. There! mother's sonny boy; come here. Don't Rafe, don't. Yes, I'll come and see the Christmas stockings. Let me be a minute. Go, Miss Ritter, with 'em, if you'll be so good. Kiss me, Rafe. Mother'll come presently, my son. Let me be a minute, won't you, by myself."

They went and left her, every one. Somebody shut the door of the chilly parlor, not quite to, and so shielded her in for a little, yet did not shut her off alone; they could not bear to.

Helen Ritter gathered the children about her, among the presents and playthings, and so they chatted quietly.

"Ready, mother?" called Rafe, at the half-shut door.

"Presently, my son."

"Tumin', mummer?" called the other baby.

"In a minute, yes, my dears."

Just as she came out among them, quiet again, and gentle with her strange, dull gentleness, Rafe got up and went to his window, and looked out. It was snowing fiercely. How heavy was the calling of the sea! It was like the chords of a majestic, mighty organ built into the walls of the world.

But what ailed Rafe? He drew away from the window; the boy had turned quite pale; and yet it could not be said that his face showed fear. He went up to his mother, and pulled her black dress.

"Marm, I see my father."

He pointed to the window, against which the storm pelted fast and furious.

"I've frightened you, Rafe," said the mother, quietly. "Rafe mustn't say such things."

"Marm," persisted the boy, "I saw my fa-ther."

"It's the snow, Rafe, you see; it's so white—Rafe must not talk like silly people. There! There's that old latch again, Rafe. How it acts! Go and fix it, dear."

Rafe obeyed, and though he looked like a spirit, he pushed like a boy. With his knee upon the bench, with his hand upon the latch—but this moment the child's shrill cry sounded and resounded through the house:

"Oh, marm, I've *got* my fa-ther!"

And Henry Salt pushed in the door, hurled over the washbench, brushed aside Miss Ritter, strode over the children, and hearing, seeing, knowing nothing else, he took his wife, in her black dress, into his arms.

HOW JINNY "EASED" HER MIND.

THOMAS NELSON PAGE.

UNCLE BEN, an "old-time darkey," was as well known as the mayor or the governor. He had been "boy" about law-offices ever since some years before when he had knocked gently at Judge Allen's door and slipped slowly in sideways, with his old beaver hat in his hands, clean shirt, time-browned coat, and patched breeches.

"Where did you come from?" the judge asked him.

"From old Charlotte, suh; used to 'longst to de Bruces."

"Can you clean up?"

He laughed a spontaneous, jolly laugh.

"Kin I clean up? Dat's what I come to do. Jinny ken, too."

"Can you read?"

"Well, nor, suh, not edzactly. I ain't no free-issue nigger ner preacher."

The shade of disappointment on his face counterbalanced this, however.

"Do you get drunk?"

"Yes, sir, sometimes"—cheerfully. "Not so often. I 'ain't got nuttin' to git de whiskey. But ef I's drunk, Jinny cleans up."

"Who is Jinny?"

"She's my wife."

"What sort of a woman is she?"

"She's a black woman. Oh! she's a good sort o'ooman—a toler'ble good sort o'ooman, ef you know how to git 'long wid her. Sort o' raspy sometimes, like urr wimmens, but I kin manage her. You kin try us. Ef you don't like us, we ken go. We' ain't got no root to we foots."

"You'll do. I'll try you," said the judge.

From that time Uncle Ben became the custodian of the offices. He was a treasure. He got drunk sometimes, but when he did, Jinny took his place and cleaned up. Her temper was, as he had said, certainly "raspy." Even flattery must have admitted this, and Uncle Ben wore a bandage or plaster on some part of his head a considerable part of his time; but no one ever heard him complain.

"Jinny jes' been kind o'easin' her mine," he said, in answer to questions.

At length it culminated. One night Jinny went to work on him with a flat-iron to such good purpose that first a policeman came in, and then a doctor had to be called to bring him to, and Jinny was arrested.

Next morning, when Jinny was sent on to the grand jury for striking with intent to maim, disfigure, disable, and kill, Ben was a trifle triumphant. When the justice announced his decision, he rose, and shaking his long finger at her, exclaimed, "Aye, aye, what I tell you?"

"Silence," roared the big tipstaff, and Ben sat down with a puzzled look on his face.

When the police court closed he went up to his wife, and said, in a commanding tone: "Now, come 'long home wid me an' 'have yourself. I'll teach you to sling flat-iron at folks' head."

The officer announced, however, that Jinny would have to go to jail—the case had passed beyond his jurisdiction. She had been "sent on to the grand jury."

Ben's countenance fell. "Got to go to jail?" he repeated, in a dazed kind of way. "Got to go to jail?"

That afternoon he spent in the judge's office. The grand jury was in session, and next day "a true bill" was found against Jinny Williamson for an attempt to maim, disfigure, disable, and kill—a felony.

The Commonwealth called Ben, first man, and he told the same story he had told at the police court and to the grand jury. Jinny had always had a vicious temper, and had often exercised it toward him. That evening she had gone rather far, and finally he had attempted to remonstrate with her, had "tapped her with his open hand," and she had pounded his head with the flat-iron. The officer was called, and corroborated the story. He had heard the noise; had gone in and found Ben unconscious and the woman, in a fury, swearing to kill him. The surgeon pronounced the wound one which came near being very serious; but for Ben's exceptionally hard head the skull would have been fractured; as it was, only the outer plate of the frontal bone was broken. The judge gave a strong instruction upon the evil of women being lawless and murderous, and the jury retired.

The appearance of the jury filing in glum and important sent Ben to his seat. The clerk called the names, and asked, "Gentlemen of the jury, have you agreed on a verdict?" The foreman bowed, and handed in the indictment, and the clerk read, slowly, "We, the jury, find the prisoner guilty," etc., "and sentence her to confinement in the penitentiary for two years."

Neither Jinny nor Ben stirred, nor did the counsel. He was evidently considering. The judge, in a voice slightly troubled, said he would pronounce sentence at once, and asked the prisoner if she had anything to say. She rocked a little and glanced shyly over toward Ben with a sort of appealing look—her first—but said nothing.

"Stand up," said the judge; and she stood up.

Just then Ben stood up too, and making his way over to her, said, "Jedge, ken I say a wud?"

"Why—ah—yes," said the judge, doubtfully. "It is very unusual, but go on."

"Well, gent'mens," began Ben, "I jes' wants to say" (he paused, and took in the entire court-room in the sweep of his glance), "I jes' wants to say dat I don't think you ought to do Jinny dat a-way. Y'all 'ain' got nuttin' 't all 'ginst Jinny. She 'ain' do nuttin' to you all—nuttin' 't all. She's my wife, an' what she done she done to me. Ef I kin stan' it, y'all ought to be able to, dat's sho'. Now hit's dis a-way. Y'all is married gent'mens, an' yo' knows jes' how 'tis. Yo' knows sometimes a ooman gits de debil in her. 'Tain't her fault; 'tis de debil's. Hit jes' like wolf in cows. Sometimes dee gits in de skin an' mecks 'em kick up an' run an' mean. Dat's de way 'tis wid wimmens. I done know Jinny ever sence she wuz a little girl at home in de country. I done know how mean she is. I done know all dat, an' I done marry her, 'cuz she suit me. I had plenty o'urr gals I could 'a'marry, but I ain' want dem. I want Jinny, an' I pester her tell she had me. Well, she meaner eben 'n I think she is; but dat ain' nuttin'; I satisfied wid her, an' dat's 'nough. Y'all don't know how mean she is. She mean as a narrer-faced mule. She kick an' she fight an' she quoil tell sometimes I hardly ken stay in muh house; but dat ain' nuttin'. I stay dyah, an' when she git thoo I right dyah jes' same as befo', an I know den I gwine have a good supper an' I ain' got to pester my

mine 'bout nuttin'. Y'all done been 'long dyah, 'cuz y'all is married gent'mens. Well, dat's de way 'twuz turr night. Jinny been good so long I feared she got som'n de matter wid her, an' I kind o' git oneasy, an' sort o' poke her up. But she ain't; she all right. I so glad to fine her dat way, I sort o'uppish, an' when she hit me I slapped her. I didn' mean to hu't her; I jes' hit her a little tap side her head, so, an' she went all to pieces in a minute. I done hu't her feelin's. Y'all knows how 'tis yo'self. Wimmen's got mighty cu'ious feelin's, ain' like chillern's nor men's. Ef you slap 'em, dey goes dat a-way. Dey gits aggervated, an' den dey got to ease dee mine. Well, Jinny she got mighty big mine, an' when she dat a-way it tecks right smart to ease it—to smoove it. Fust she done try broom, den cheer, den shovel, den skillet; but ain' none o' dem able to ease her, an' den she got to try de flat-iron. She got to do it. Y'all knows how 'tis. Ef wimmen's got to do anything dey got to do it, an' dat's all. Flat-iron don't hu't none. I 'ain' eben feel it. Hit jes' knock me out muh head little while, an' I jes' good as I wuz befo'. When I come to I fine dee done 'rest Jinny. Dat's what hu't me. Jinny done been easin' her mine all dese years, an' we 'ain' nuver had no trouble befo.' An' now y'all say she got to go to de pen'tentia'y. How'd y'all like somebody to sen' you' wife to de pen'tentia'y when she jes' easin' her mine? I ax you dat. I know y'all gwine sen' her dyah, gent'mens, cuz you done say you is. I know you is, an' I 'ain' got nuttin' to say 'bout it, not a wud; but all I ax you is to le' me go dyah too. I don' want stay here b'dout Jinny an' y'all ain' gwine to know how to manage her b'dout me. I is de on'iest one kin do dat. Jinny got six chillern —little chillern—dis las' crap; she didn't hab none some sevrul years an' den she had six. I gwine bring 'em all right up heah to y'all to teck keer on, 'cuz I gwine wid her—ef you le' me. I kyarn stan' it dyah by myself. I leetle mo' went 'stracted las' night. Y'all kin have 'em, 'cuz y'all ken teck keer on 'em, an' I kyan't. I would jes' like you to let her go home for a leetle while 'fo' yo' sen' her up, I jes' would like dat. She got a right new baby dyah squealin' for her dis minute, an' I mighty feared hit gwine to die widout her, an' dat'll be right hard 'pon Jinny. She ain' never los' but dyah one, an' I had right smart trouble wid her 'bout dat. She sort o' out her head arter

dat some sevrul months, till she got straight agin. I git 'long toler'ale well wid de urr chillerns, but I ain' able to nuss dat new one, an' she squeal all night. I got a ooman to come dyah an' look arter it, but she say she want Jinny, an' I think Jinny want her—I think she do. Jes' let her go dyah a little while. Dat's all I want to ax you."

He sat down.

A glance at Jinny proved his assertion. Her eyes were shut fast, and with her arms tightly folded across her ample bosom, she was rocking gently from side to side. Two tears had pushed out from under her eyes, and stood gleaming on her black cheeks.

The counsel glanced up at the judge, whose face wore a look of deep perplexity, and then at the jury.

"I would like to poll the jury," he said.

The clerk read the verdict over, and called the first name. "Is that your verdict?"

The juror arose. "Well, judge, I thought it was; but" (he looked down at his fellows) "I think if I could I would like to talk to one or two of the other jurors a minute, if it is not too late. My wife's got a right new baby at home herself that squealed a little last night, and I'd like to go back to the room and think about it."

"Sheriff, take the jury back to their room," said the judge, firmly.

In a few minutes they returned, and the verdict was read:

"We, the jury, all married men, find the prisoner guilty of only easing her mind."

CHANGE OF VOICE.

I SAT beside my love that night;
My heart it did rejoice
To sit there in the softened light
And hear her dulcet voice.

But now two years my wife she's been;
No doubt it does seem queer,
But now I leave the parlor when
Her dull, set voice I hear.

AT THE STROKE OF TWO.

HARRIS DICKSON.

[Cutting from "The Ravanels."]

Stephen Ravanel, son of Major Stephen Ravanel of the Southern army and exact image of his father, is on trial for murder of Captain Powhatan Rudd. Rudd had ridden side by side with the elder Ravanel all through the Civil War, and shortly after its close had stabbed and killed his comrade in the street in Natchez, Miss. The younger Stephen had been reared in the thought that vengeance for his father's death would some day be his, but had never seen Captain Rudd until the night when he murdered him in Vicksburg, Miss. Stephen is a fine, noble man, and his friends are certain he did not wantonly kill Rudd, but Stephen has told no one the circumstances. A clear case has been proven against him, and the defense has in its favor only the fact that the knife used in the stabbing belonged to Captain Rudd, was, indeed, the one with which he had stabbed the elder Ravanel years before, and that he always kept it under his pillow at night. The killing of Rudd had occurred at two A.M., and the doctor who attended Stephen during his days in prison had observed that on the stroke of two Stephen became for the time being unconscious of his surrounding and seemed to live over again the incidents of the murder.

THERE is a peculiar awe in that reverential stillness which sometimes falls upon a court. It was such a silence that followed Warfield's voice, "Call Stephen Ravanel."

"Be sworn, Mr. Ravanel." Stephen looked the clerk steadily in the eye and held up his right hand.

"You do solemnly swear that the testimony you give in this case shall be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?"

"I do."

"Mr. Ravanel, please state your name, age, and place of residence."

"Stephen Ravanel, age twenty-nine; until October 25 of this year I lived in Adams County near Natchez, Mississippi."

"You are the defendant in this case?"

"I am, sir."

"Did you know Captain Powhatan Rudd?"

"I saw him once, on the night of October 26."

"Where did you see him?"

"At his room in the Nogales Inn—I supposed it to be his room, he seemed to be sleeping in there."

"Previous to seeing him in that room did you know, or had you any reason to believe, Captain Rudd to be in Vicksburg?"

"No, sir."

"Did you know, or had you any reason to believe him to be in room Number 114?"

"No, sir."

"Now, Mr. Ravanel, please begin at the beginning and tell the jury in your own way everything that happened to you on that night."

Stephen revolved his chair and faced the jurors. Joel Webster looked straight at him; the others kept their eyes averted—a bad sign, but before he had spoken a dozen sentences every juror was gazing into his face.

Beyond the railing there were tiers upon tiers of listeners, and not a man of the many hundreds moved or breathed or shifted his glance.

He told the jury briefly of his arrival at the Inn and his assignment to room Number 112. He told how after his friends left him, he took his key and went upstairs alone.

At this point Stephen paused and glanced at his aunt. Suddenly his thought flashed backward to that marble table on which the cold body of his father had lain on the day when she had made him, a mere child, swear never to forget vengeance.

He passed again through all the wanderings of childhood, through the lapse of predestined years, until he had come face to face with that inevitable thing from which there was no escape.

During that instant of hesitation the clock in the belfry struck one, two. A slight shuddering swept over Stephen's face; the same dull expression came that had so terrified the doctor that first night in the jail.

Stephen raised his eyes and stretched an arm above the jury as

if he looked beyond them all. When he began to speak again it was with the rushing of a torrent. He looked at the jury without seeming to see them.

"I ran upstairs for my satchel; the room was dark. I tried to light the gas, but found I had no match, and, fumbling around, succeeded in turning on an incandescent light. I replaced some small articles in the satchel, turned off the light, and left the room. I had already locked the door behind me when I remembered my umbrella and went back to get it. I felt around in the dark, knocked against something, and made a noise; then I noticed a strong odor of gas and supposed I must have turned it on by accident. I was just in the act of reaching up for the jet when I heard a cry from the next room. It was not loud—more like a moan. Another cry followed immediately, somewhat louder. And then someone in that room called out 'Stephen! oh, Stephen!' It startled me, but as I had no friends in the hotel I thought it could not be meant for me. The voice was unfamiliar.

"I was still trying to find the gas-jet when I very clearly heard the words: 'Stephen Ravanel! For God's sake, Stephen!' the appeal of a man in mortal fear. I rushed to the door between the rooms; it was locked—"

Stephen rose abruptly and stepped into the open space before the jury, "Then I burst the door."

As he spoke he lunged forward with his shoulder, took a quick step or two, and showed the jury what had happned in that room of death.

"I burst the door; there was a table on the other side; it fell and broke. I stopped; the glare in the room dazzled my eyes; I could see nothing.

"I was beginning to see a little when there came another scream, 'My God, it's Stephen!' A man in his nightclothes bounded out of bed and sprang on me. I saw the glitter of his knife; it ripped me here, and here, and here, before I could catch his arm. We grappled, we fought, we fell to the floor. I tried to take the knife from him; he was a strong man and jerked away from me. As he came at me again I struck him with a chair and knocked the knife from his hand. It flew into a corner, and we fell together on top of it. It must have

been there that I cut him first; I do not know how, but I saw the blood on his shirt.

"We fought on the floor and struggled to our feet. He bit my shoulder; I dropped the knife; he writhed out of my arms, steadied himself against the bed, crouched, and sprang on me again.

"I can scarcely tell you what happened then; I only know that we fought on the floor, on the bed, around the room, everywhere. The next thing that I remember clearly was that I had the knife myself and was driving it into his breast. I felt it strike a bone. He trembled, and sank in my arms. We were standing then directly beneath the chandelier; everything was deadly still, and the court-house clock struck —one—two—it was the first time I had ever heard it. Some people burst in from the hall. I paid no attention to them; the man in my arms was dying. I felt his legs give way and had to hold him up. Then I looked at him and saw that he had only one eye. I knew then that I had killed Captain Powhatan Rudd, the man who murdered my father."

Stephen stepped back and dropped into his chair, his eyes half closed. The jury sat stiller than men of stone. Not a sound rose from the great room.

At last Judge Sharkey asked, "Has the defendant any further evidence?"

"That is our case, your Honor," responded Warfield. The jury brought in the verdict, "Not guilty."

WIFE'S PLAN TO ECONOMIZE.

"WE must economize, my dear," his wife said, very sweetly;
Her face took on an earnest look that won his heart completely.
"I think," she said, "that flannel shirts would suit you very nicely,
For summer time is coming, and they are the things precisely.
Your laundry bill, you know, is very large for shirts and cuffs and collars;
"Twould save, you see—and for my hat I need just twenty dollars."

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FORT HAYS KANSAS STATE COLLEGE

OLD TRAPPER'S CHRISTMAS DINNER.

("JOHN NORTON.")

W. H. H. (Adirondack) MURRAY.

A CABIN in the wood. The great fireplace piled high with logs fiercely ablaze. On either side of the fireplace are the hounds gazing meditatively into the fire. And at the strong table, bending over the sacred book, with one huge finger marking a sentence, John Norton, the trapper.

"Yis, pups, it must go in, for here it be writ in the Book: 'Do unto others as ye would that others should do unto you.'

"Christmas be coming, and ye and me and Sport, yender, have sot it down that we're to have a dinner, and the question in council to-night is, Who shall we invite to our dinner? Here we have been arguin' the matter three nights atween us, and we didn't git a foot ahead, because ye and me, Rover, naterally felt alike, for we have never consorted with vagabonds, and we couldn't bear the idee of invitin' 'em to this cabin and eatin' with 'em. So, we agreed to-night we'd go to the Book and go by the Book, hit or miss.

"And now, as we've settled it atween us, and we all stand agreed in the matter, I'll git the bark and the coal, and we'll see how the decision of the council looks when it be put in writin'.

"Any man or animal that be in want of vitals or garments be invited to come on Christmas Day—which be next week Thursday—without furder axin', to John Norton's cabin, on Long Lake, to eat Christmas dinner. Vagabonds included in this invite."

The old trapper was a man of gifts, and among his gifts was that of cooking. For sixty years he had been his own chef with a continent for his larder, and to more than one gourmand of the great cities the tastiness and delicacy of his dishes had been a revelation. It is easy to imagine the happiness he experienced in preparing the feast. The great cabin was a bower of beauty and fragrance. On one side hung a huge piece of white cotton cloth, on which the trapper, with a vast outlay of patience, had stitched small cones of pine into the conventional phrase:

"A Merry Christmas to Ye All."

Dinner was called prompt to the hour.

"Friends," said the trapper, "I be glad to see ye at my table, and I hope ye have brought a good appetite with ye, for the victuals be plenty and no one need scrimp the size of his eatin'. Let us all eat heartily and be merry, for this be Christmas. Ef we've had bad luck in the past, we'll hope for better luck in the futur', and take heart. Ef we've been heavy hearted or sorrowful, we will chirk up. Ef any have wronged us, we will forgive and forgit. For this be Christmas, friends, and Christmas be a day for forgivin' and forgettin'. And now then," he continued, as he flourished his knife and grasped the huge fork preparatory to plunging it into the venison haunch in front of him, "with good appetites and a cheerful mind, let us all fall to eatin'."

Thus went the feasting. Hunger had brought its appetite to the plentiful table and the well-cooked viands provoked its indulgence. The merriment was at its height when a loud summons sounded upon the door. It was so imperious as well as so unexpected that every noise was instantly hushed and every face at the table was turned in surprise to wait the entrance.

"Come in," cried the trapper cheerily, "whoever ye be, ye be welcome, ef ye be a leetle late."

The response was as prompt as the summons had been determined. The great door was pushed suddenly inward, and a man stepped into the room. A sturdy fellow he was, swarthy of skin and full whiskered. His face was strongly featured and stamped in every line and curve and prominence with the impress of unmistakable power. Regardless of those who sat staring in startled interrogation at him, he strode to the head of the table where the old trapper sat, and looking him straight in the face, said:

"Do you know who I am, John Norton?"

"Sartainly, ye be Shanty Jim and ye have camped these three years and more at the outlet of Bog Lake."

"Do you know that I am a thief, and a sneak thief at that?"

"I've conceited ye was."

"Do you know it, know it to a certainty?"

"Yis, I know that ye be a thief, Shanty Jim, know it to a sartinty."

"Do you know that I have stolen skins from you, old man, skins and traps both?"

"I laid in ambush for ye once at the falls of Bog River, and I seed you take an otter from a trap that I sot."

"Do you know what brought me to this cabin and to your presence —the presence of the man whose skins and whose traps I have stolen— and made me confess to his face and before these men here that I am a thief and a scoundrel; do you know what brought me here, John Norton?"

"I can't conceit, onless the sperit of the Lord."

"It was nothing under God's heavens, old man, but your invitation scrawled with a coal on a bit of birch bark inviting anyone in these woods who needed victuals and clothes and a right spirit to come to your cabin on Christmas Day, and had you written nothing else I would not have cared for it or for you; but you did write something else and it was this: 'Vagabonds included in this invite.'

"When I read that, my breath left me and I stood and stared at the letters on that bark as a devil might gaze at a pardon signed with the seal manual of the Almighty, for in my hand was a trap that bore the stamp 'J. N.' and the skin of an otter I had taken from the trap. And there I stood, with your property in my hands, and read your invitation to all the needy in the woods to come to your cabin for Christmas Day, and that vagabonds were included.

"Then I realized what I was and what John Norton was, and the difference between him and myself and most of the world. I went to the tree to which the bark that bore the blessed letters was nailed; I took it down from the tree; I placed it next my bosom and buttoned my coat above it and, thus resting upon my heart, I bore it to my shanty.

"All that night I sat and gazed at that piece of bark and the writing on it, and as I gazed my heart melted within me. For there it was ever before my eyes—'Vagabonds included in this invite,' 'Vagabonds included in this invite.' And, finally, the words passed into the air, and wherever I looked I saw, 'Vagabonds included in this invite.'

"Yis, them be the very words I writ."

"And I saw more than the words written on that bark, John Norton. For looking at it, I saw all my past life and the evil of it, and I said, when the sun comes I will rise and go to the man who wrote those words and tell him what they did for me. And here I am, a vagabond who has accepted your invitation to spend Christmas with you, and here in this pack are the skins and the traps I have stolen from you, and I ask your forgiveness, and that you will take my hand in proof of it, that I may come to your table feeling that I am a man, and a vagabond no longer."

"Heart and hand are yours now and forever, Shanty Jim," cried the trapper joyfully, and he met the outstretched hand of the repentant vagabond with his own hearty grasp. "And may the Lord be with ye evermore."

"Amen," exclaimed Wild Bill, and, snatching his cap from a peg above him, he swung it over his head and shouted, "Glory to God."

"John Norton," said the man, "you have called me Shanty Jim, and that is well, for in the woods here that is my name, but in the city where I lived and whence I fled, fled because of my misdeeds, years ago, I have another name, a name of power and wealth and honor for more than two centuries. There I have a home, and in that home to-night sit my aged father and white-haired mother. I am going back to them clothed and in my right mind. Think of it, old trapper, going back to my home, my boyhood's home, to my father and my mother. All day, as I tramped on the trail towards your cabin, my mind has been filled with memories of the past."

"May yer home comin' be as happy as was the boy's we read of in scriptur', although I never could conceit why the mother was not there to go forth and meet him and fall on his neck with the father. And I sartinly trust, as do all of us here, that ye will find mother and father both waitin' and watchin' for ye when the curve of the trail brings ye in sight of the cabin. Come, take the chair here by my side, and we will all talk as we eat; aye, and sing, too, for this be Christmas."

Long and merry was the meal and a fine atmosphere of hope, charity and courage spread from heart to heart, until at last it filled with its genial and illuminating presence every bosom. His Christmas

dinner had been all that the old trapper had hoped, and his heart was filled with happiness. He rose and, standing erect in his place, said:

"Ye tell me that the time has come for ye to go, and I dare say ye be right, but I be sorry that we must part, for in partin' we be never sure of a meetin', and, therefore, as I conceit, all the partin's on the arth be more or less sad, but all trails, it may be, will come together in the end. One thing I want to say to ye in goin'; Christmas is a day of feastin', and givin', and laughin', but, above everything else, it is the day for forgivin' and forgettin'. Some of ye be young and may yer days be long on the arth, and some of yer heads be white as mine and yer years not many, but be that as it may, whether our Christmas days be many or few, when the great day comes round let us remember in good or ill fortin' alone or with many, that Christmas above all else is the day for forgivin' and forgettin', an' now, good-night."

IF I SHOULD DIE TO-NIGHT.

BEN. KING.

IF I should die to-night
And you should come to my cold corpse and say,
Weeping and heart sick o'er my lifeless clay—
If I should die to-night
And you should come in deepest grief and woe
And say: "Here's that ten dollars that I owe"—
I might arise in my large white cravat
And say: "What's that?"

If I should die to-night
And you should come to my cold corpse and kneel,
Clasping my bier to show the grief you feel—
I say, if I should die to-night
And you should come to me and there and then
Just even hint of paying me that ten,
I might rise the while;
But I'd drop dead again.

EDITHA'S BURGLAR.

FRANCES HODGSON BURNETT.

EDITHA was always rather a queer little girl. She was very fond of reading the newspapers, because she found so many curious things in them. She found that there were actually men who lived by breaking into people's houses and that such men were called burglars. One morning at breakfast she spoke to her father about them.

"Papa, dear, what do you think of burglars—as a class?" Her papa gave a little jump in his chair.

"Bless my soul! I think they're a bad lot, Nixie. Never mind about the burglars."

"Well, I can't help thinking that there must be one good burglar among all the bad ones, and I can't help being rather sorry, even for the bad ones."

It was strange that the first thing she heard, when she went up to her mamma's room, was something about burglars.

"Ah, mem! if you please, mem! what a blessing it was they didn't come here!"

"Who, Janet?"

"The burglars, Miss, that broke into Number Eighteen last night, and carried off all the silver, and the missus's jewelry."

"If burglars ever do break in here, Nixie," said her mamma, "whatever you do, don't scream or make any noise."

And that very night Editha met a burglar.

Just before dinner her papa dashed up to the front door in a cab, and, jumping out, ran upstairs to mamma.

"Kitty, my dear, I am obliged to go to Glasgow."

"Oh, Francis! And just after that burglary at the Norris's! I don't like to be left alone."

"The servants are here, and Nixie will take care of you; won't you, Nixie?"

He was joking, but Editha felt that it was a very serious matter.

That night she slept until midnight, and then something wakened her—a sound like a stealthy filing of iron.

"It is a burglar," she thought, "and he will awaken mamma. I'll go down and ask him to please be as quiet as he can, and I'll tell him why."

Imagine the astonishment of that burglar, when, on hearing the door open, he turned round and found himself looking at a slender little girl, in a white frilled nightgown, and with bare feet,—a little girl whose large brown eyes rested on him in a by no means unfriendly way.

"Don't be frightened, I don't want to hurt you; I came to ask a favor of you. You see I couldn't hurt you if I wanted to. I'm too little, and I'm not going to scream, because that would waken mamma, and that's just what I don't want to do."

"Well, I'm blowed."

"If you please, are you really a burglar?"

"Lor', no, miss, by no manner o' means. I'm a dear friend o' yer par's, come to make a evenin' call, an' not a-wishin' to trouble the servants, I stepped in through the winder."

"You are joking with me, as papa does sometimes. If you are going to burgle, would you please burgle as quietly as you can, so that you won't disturb mamma?"

"Well, I'll be blowed!"

"Why don't you say, 'I'll be blown?' I'm sure it isn't correct to say you'll be 'blowed.' What are you going to burgle first?"

"You'd better go up-stairs to your mar."

"You oughtn't to burgle anything. Of course, you know that, but if you have really made up your mind to do it, I would like to show you the things you'd better take."

"What, fer instance?"

"You mustn't take any of mamma's things, because they are all in her room, and you would waken her, and she said it would break her heart; and don't take any of the things papa is fond of. I'll tell you what, you can take my things."

"What kind o' things?"

"My locket, and the little watch papa gave me, and the necklace and bracelets my grandmamma left me,—they are worth a great deal

of money, and they are very pretty, and I was to wear them when I grew to be a young lady, but—you can take them. And—then—there—are my books. I'm very fond of them, but—"

"I don't want no books."

"Don't you? Oh, thank you."

"Shall I go up-stairs and get the other things?"

"No, come along o' me inter the pantry, an' sit down while I'm occupied."

He led the way into the pantry and began to open the drawers where the silver was kept.

"It's curious that you should know just where to look for things, and that your key should fit, isn't it?"

"Yes, werry sing'lar, indeed. There's a good deal in bein' eddicated."

"Are you educated?"

"Did yer think I wasn't?"

"Is your business a good one?"

"Tain't as good as it ought to be, by no manner o' means. Every one hain't as hobligin' as you, my little dear."

"Oh! You know you obliged me by not making a noise."

"Well, as a rule, we don't make a practice o' makin' no more noise than we can help. It hain't considered 'ealthy in the perfession." And then he broke into a low laugh, as if he was thinking of something very funny indeed.

"Would you really rather be a burglar than anything else?"

"Well, p'r'aps I'd prefer to be Lord Mayor, or a member o' the 'Ouse o' Lords, or heven the Prince o' Wales, honly for there bein' hobstacles in the way of it."

"Oh! you couldn't be the Prince of Wales, you know. I meant wouldn't you rather be in some other profession? My papa is an editor. How would you like to be an editor?"

"Hit's wot I've allers 'ad a leanin' to."

Perhaps papa might speak to his friends about you, if you would give me your name and address.

"To think o' me a-forgettin' my card-case. I might hev knowed I'd hev wanted it."

"If you told me your name and your number, I think I could remember it."

"I'm afeared yer couldn't, but I'll try yer. Lord Halgernon Hedward Halbert de Pentonwille, Yke Park."

"Are you a lord? Dear me, how strange!"

"It is sing'lar. I've hoften thought so myself. But not wishin' to detain a lady no longer than can be 'elped, s'pose we take a turn in the lib'ery among yer par's things."

"Don't make a noise," said Editha, as she led the way.

But when they reached the library her loving little heart failed her.

"Oh, please do me another favor? Please let me slip quietly up-stairs and bring down my own things instead. They are very valuable, and—and I will make you a present of them if you will not touch anything that belongs to papa. He is so fond of his things, and he is so good."

"Go an' get yer gimcracks."

Her bare feet made no sound as she crept slowly up the staircase and then down again. But when she handed the little box to the burglar her eyes were wet.

"Papa gave me the watch, and mamma gave me the locket, and the pearls were grandmamma's, and grandmamma is in heaven."

"Well, good-bye," and she held out her hand politely. "And thank you, my lord."

He shook hands with her in quite a friendly manner, and even made a bow.

"Yer welcome, my dear. An' I must hadd that if I ever see a queerer or better behaved little kid, may I be blowed—or, as yer told me it would be more correcter to say, I'll be blown."

It was astonishing how neatly he slipped through the window; he was gone in a second, and Editha found herself standing alone in the dark.

She groped her way out and up the stairs, and then, for the first time, she began to feel weak and strange.

She said nothing all through the excitement that followed the discovery of the robbery, nothing until her papa came home and she could keep her secret no longer.

She scarcely understood why mamma cried so, and why even papa's eyes were wet as he held her close up to his breast.

But about six months after a police officer came one day from the burglar, who was in jail and wanted to see Editha.

Editha's papa took her to him.

"How do you do, my lord?" she said.

"Not as lively as common, miss. In consekence o' the confinement not bein' good fer my 'e'lth."

And then the burglar brought forth from under his mattress a box, which he handed to the little girl. "I thought yer might as well hev 'em. I almost made up my mind to give 'em back afore I left, but it was agin human natur'."

And a few weeks later a parcel was left for Editha by a very shabby, queer-looking man. It was a very large, old-fashioned silver watch, and inside the lid were scratched these words:

"To the little Kid,
From 'er fr'end and well wisher
Lord halgernon hedward halbert
de pentonwill, ide park."

MUSICAL ROMANCE.

"MAID, altogether fair," he cried,
"Be mine, my high soprano bride;
Let us duet life's journey through,
Enchanting singer, what say you?

"Our key shall be a little flat,
A finely furnished one at that;
There we will live on minor scale,
In style to make the Major quail."

Said she, "I sing too sharp for that,
You never catch me in a flat;
I choose the notes of higher pitch,
The Major has them—he is rich."

DOUGLAS-LINCOLN DEBATE.

("THE FREEPORT DEBATE.")

WINSTON CHURCHILL.

[Cutting from "The Crisis."]

STEPHEN A. DOUGLAS, called the Little Giant on account of his intellect, had deliberately renewed, in 1858, the agitation on the spread of slavery, by setting forth a doctrine of extreme cleverness calculated to deceive all except thinking men, and to silence all save a merciless logician. And this merciless logician, heaven-sent in time of need, was Abraham Lincoln.

The great panacea for the slavery trouble put forth by Mr. Douglas was this: that the people of the new territories should decide for themselves, subject to the constitution, whether they should have slavery or no. Unhappily for Mr. Douglas, the Chief Justice of the United States had declared that under the constitution slaves were property,—and as such every American citizen owning slaves could carry them about with him wherever he went. Therefore the territorial legislatures might pass laws until they were dumb and yet their settlers might bring with them all the slaves they pleased.

Lincoln descried the danger afar, and threw himself into the breach. He agreed to meet Douglas in open debate at Freeport, Illinois.

America was in Freeport that day, the rush of her people and the surprise of her climate. The rain had ceased, and quickly was come out of the northwest a boisterous wind, chilled by the lakes and scented by the hemlocks of the Minnesota forests. Cheering thousands pressed about the station as Mr. Lincoln's train arrived. The county delegations fell into their proper precedence like ministers at a state dinner.

"*We have faith in Abraham.*"

"*Yet another county for the rail-splitter.*"

"Abe, the giant-killer."

So the banners read.

Fifes skirled, and drums throbbed, and the Stars and Stripes snapped in the breeze. And here was a delegation headed by fifty sturdy ladies on horseback. Then came carryalls of all ages and degrees, wagons from this county and that county, giddily draped, drawn by horses from one to six, or by mules, and nearly all of them bore a fence-rail as inscription.

But stay, what is this wagon with the high sapling flagstaff in the middle, and the leaves still on it?

"Westward the Star of Empire takes its way.
The girls link on to Lincoln; their mothers were for Clay."

Here was glory to blind you,—two and thirty maids in red sashes and blue liberty-caps with white stars. Each was a State of the Union, and every one of them was for Abraham. Behind them, most touching of all, sat a thirty-third shackled in chains. That was Kansas. Alas, the mien of Kansas was far from being as sorrowful as the part demanded,—in spite of her instructions, she would smile at the boys.

Mr. Douglas had arrived the evening before to the booming of two and thirty guns and had his banners and his bunting, too. The neighborhood of Freeport was a stronghold of Northern Democrats, ardent supporters of the Little Giant, if once they could believe that he did not intend to betray them. Bands blared "Columbia, the Gem of the Ocean." Fakers planted their stands in the way, selling pain-killers and ague-cures, watermelons, and lemonade. Jugglers juggled, and beggars begged. There were sixteen thousand people in that grove that eventful day. The pulse of a nation was there, a great nation stricken with approaching fever.

With the spirit of their ancestors who had left their farms to die on the bridge at Concord, or follow Ethan Allen into Ticonderoga, these men had come to Freeport. What were days of bodily discomfort! What even the loss of a cherished crop, if the nation's existence were at stake and their votes might save it!

In the midst of that heaving human sea rose the bulwarks of a wooden stand. On it was Mr. Lincoln slouched into one of his favorite attitudes, his chin resting in his hand.

But who is this, erect, compact, aggressive, searching with a confident eye the wilderness of upturned faces? Here, indeed, was a lion, by the very look of him, master of himself and of others. A man of the world to the cut of the coat across the broad shoulders. How "country" Abraham Lincoln looked beside Stephen Arnold Douglas!

Had the Lord ever before made and set over against each other two such different men? Yes, for such are the ways of the Lord.

There was a hush, and the waves of that vast human sea were stilled. A man—lean, angular, with coat-tails flapping—unfolded like a grotesque figure at a side-show. Stooping forward, Abraham Lincoln began to speak. Could this shrill falsetto be the same voice which had won for itself attention in former debates? Ripples of derisive laughter rose here and there, on the stand and from the crowd.

But what was this feeling that gradually crept over the people? Their minds were gone on a journey and Abraham Lincoln was a man transformed. The voice was no longer shrill. Nay, it was now a powerful instrument which played strangely on those who heard. Now it rose, and again it fell into tones so low as to start a stir which spread and spread like a ripple in a pond, until it broke on the very edge of that vast audience.

"*Can the people of a United States territory, in any lawful way, against the wish of any citizen of the United States, exclude slavery from its limits prior to the formation of a State Constitution?*"

It was out, at last, irrevocably writ in the recording book of History, for better, for worse. Beyond the reach of politician, committee, or caucus. But what man amongst those who heard and stirred, might say that these minutes even now hasting into eternity held the crisis of a nation that is the hope of the world? Not you, Judge Douglas, who sit there smiling. Consternation is a stranger in your heart,—but answer that question, if you can. You do not feel the noose—as yet. You do not guess that your reply will make or mar the fortunes of your country.

But, see! what is this man about, whom you despise? One by one he is taking the screws out of the engine which you have invented to run your ship. Look, he holds them in his hands without mixing them, and shows the false construction of its secret parts.

For Abraham Lincoln dealt with abstruse questions in language so limpid that many a farmer, dulled by toil, heard and understood and marveled.

The Honorable Stephen A. Douglas rose to reply. The question seemed not to trouble him in the least. And then, save for the gusts of wind rustling the trees, the grove might have been empty of its thousands, such was the silence that fell.

"It matters not," he cried, "it matters not which way the Supreme Court may hereafter decide as to the abstract question whether slavery may or may not go into a territory under the constitution. The people have the lawful means to introduce or to exclude it as they please, for the reason that slavery cannot exist a day or an hour anywhere unless it is supported by local police regulations."

Judge Douglas, uneasy will you lie to-night for you have uttered the "Freeport Heresy," and the greatest debate of modern times is over.

WHEN PADEREWSKI PLAYS.

EDWARD S. CREAMER.

WHEN Paderewski plays each separate hair
Of his fine head becomes a wonderous plant
Of power electrical, and this the fair,
Sweet portion of humanity doth much enchant;
And then the magic of his fingers fine,
When he strikes notes that fluctuate the soul,
When appetite lusts not for earthly wine,
But feasts on nectar in the player's control.
Nor can we doubt the story of the day,
Of two young women present, lovely faced,
Who, being overcome as he did play,
Forgot themselves, and each the other embraced.
E'en men have yielded to his glorious powers,
And, 'neath the spell, have bought their wives rich flowers.

BLACK SILAS.

VIRGINIA FRAZER BOYLE.

BLACK SILAS had killed a man. Of course, there had been no regular trial for murder, for the old plantation had always been a law unto itself, and Judge Clayton administered that law. The ease-loving, tender-hearted judge could never whip a slave and the crushing of Black Silas by another he was not willing to witness, for Black Silas was no ordinary negro; but the crime had been considered a grave offense; and so, after a preliminary arraignment before the three hundred field-hands—for Black Silas belonged to that class—the culprit was allowed to choose his own punishment.

Standing apart, in the early sunlight, with his great knotted arms bare and head bowed low, stolid and unwavering, like an ebony colossus, Black Silas had asked for time.

Ole Marse was proud of his chattel, for there was no other negro on ten plantations of such proportions, and stories of his marvelous strength were current for a hundred miles. He looked upon the statuesque figure before him, then over at the forge beside the great live-oak, before he answered, "To-morrow at six—no later, Silas."

Speculation in the quarters ran high. Never before had there been so much work at one time in the plantation shop. Silas attended each demand with dignity, no amount of impatience inducing him to break his even tenor. The last plow had been sharpened, the last tire adjusted; the figure moving like a piece of bronze mechanism, slow and unbending, and at last, in the sunset, Black Silas leaned against the live oak outside the shop to think. Beneath the stern, calm exterior was a ferment that the flinty muscles, all the day at the forge, could not dispel.

"I kilt 'im! I kilt 'im!" he muttered slowly, as if to recall the chain of events. "He stole my gal, an' I kilt 'im! I kilt 'im, an' I'm glad I kilt 'im!"

The great arms were swung above his head, and the features worked

convulsively in an ecstasy of gratified revenge. Then the fire died and the arms fell heavily. "Ole marse done left hit ter me ter say let Unc' Zeke lash me, but er nigger cain't lay han's on me, mun, while dis head's hot. I cain't! Oh, I cain't!"

He must run away. He could swim across the river; he had done it many a time. Once across, no questions would be asked, for ole marse had given him many privileges and once beyond—he looked at his bare arms, gnarled and corded,—who would dare molest him? How often he had joined the hunt after a "runaway nigger!" He knew just what short cuts they always took. But no posse would ever hunt for him. That was as far as his mind could pierce; beyond was the enormity of black, chaotic uncertainty. Deliberately he put the tools in their places and set the shop in order. Jezrul would stand at the bellows alone in the morning; then he paused regretfully, with his hand on the door before he closed it for the last time.

"Whooee, Unc' Silas! Wait for me! wait!" There were tears in a childish voice, the patter of little hurrying bare feet in the dust, and a baby in a torn blue pinafore stood breathlessly before him, holding high in his hand a broken iron toy.

"It's b'oke! it's b'oke!" and again tears, dirt and curls were mingled in confusion.

Gently the giant lifted the midget to his knee, but the curly head was pressed against the great breast, inconsolable.

"Dar, now! dar, now! Don't cry, little marse; we kin fix hit!"

There was the gleam of a smile through the rain. "I can put it to bed, an' you'll tote me back, an' tell Suky not to scold."

"Y-a-s-." The answer came slowly, for there was a mission across the river just at nightfall. The tone was hardly reassuring, and again the little man began to weep.

"I wants my pretty right now!" There was an unconscious imperiousness, and the giant looked helplessly into the tiny face before him. The wind was rising, he seemed to be swimming for the shore; he could almost feel the splash of the water about his neck. The humiliation was left behind; what then? He did not care.

"I want it fixed *now!*" It was only a baby who was crying, ole marse's latest-born. A moment he wavered, then something seemed

to loosen about his throat, and he swung the sobbing child high upon his shoulder.

"Nebber min', little marse; we'll fix hit ter-night! Come, he'p me blow the fire!"

The moon was showing a silver thread with a star upon its horn as in the twilight Black Silas turned the key in the padlock, and strode through the field to the big house, with ole marse's baby boy laughingly astride on his shoulder.

"Unc' Silas mighty good to Ben," whispered the red lips in his ear. "When I gets real big I goin' to buy him a candy-house, Unc' Silas!"

"Um! um!" The assent was preoccupied. Yes, he would take the baby to the house and ask to see ole marse. Of course, it was not usual, but the child would be the excuse. Ole marse had always been good and kind—he would tell him everything, even about the girl, and how the murder was really committed, which nobody knew, and then ole marse could do anything he chose with him; he would surely relieve him from his difficulty, for the responsibility was too great.

"You aint listenin', Unc' Silas!"

"Yas, I is, honey; yas, I is!"

"An' we make mama fink we ridin' a big black horse, won't we, Unc' Silas?"

The little dusty heels beat a tattoo on each side of the great shoulder. "Aint you my big black horse?"

"Yas, yas, honey!"

It was a happy thought; yes, ole marse could and would help him. But on reaching the mansion he was told that ole marse had been called away to hold court at Holly Ridge and would not be back for three days.

"Good night, Unc' Silas!" called the cheery little voice.

"Good night, honey." The farewell smothered something that was almost a sob.

"I'll tell papa 'bout it," continued the little voice. "Good night!"

To-morrow, to-morrow at six! The darkest hour had passed, the stars were winking sleepily; it was already to-morrow. At six the plantation bell would ring; at six he would say what he had chosen,

and there before the three hundred negroes, before *her*, Unc' Zeke would administer it. Perhaps after all ole marse had left a message. Be that as it might, the hand of a negro had never whipped him, and never should. Long before the sun had risen the smoke from the forge was creeping upward, and long before the smoke arose Black Silas had made his choice.

It was six; the negroes were gathered over against the shop, where Black Silas had been arraigned the day before. Unc' Zeke, looking anywhere but at the figure against the tree, cleared his throat uncomfortably.

"Listen to me, an' look, all yo' people. I's here en de flesh to 'minister de jestice er Jedge Ashbel Clayton on de pusson er Silas Clayton, wha' am beknownst ter we all as Black Silas, fer de killin' er Limpin' Moss."

Then a silence fell, a leaf fluttered from the live oak, and over in the wheat-field a partridge whistled; three hundred pairs of ears and eyes were alert.

"Black Silas, ercordin' ter de day, Ise waitin' ter hear yo' choice." The lounger against the tree was as immovable as stone. The crowd swayed restlessly.

"Black Silas, Ise waitin' ter hear yo' choice."

A tiny thread of smoke was still climbing from the chimney of the forge, and turning sullenly, the figure of Black Silas was lost a moment through the doorway.

"*Dis* am my choice."

A pair of ruddy branding-irons were hurled in the midst of the scurrying negroes. Unc' Zeke recoiled.

The giant's brow darkened, his teeth were set hard together, and with arms still folded, he knelt in the dust beside Unc' Zeke's pavillon.

"*Dis* am my choice."

And Unc' Zeke, dominated by the stronger will, under the influence of a strange compelling power, moving as one in a dream, touched with the hot iron the forehead of the kneeling man.

* * * * * * * *

It was a beautiful world that Judge Clayton saw as he drove through

the afternoon shadows. It was his world, and the reins were slackened and hardly held—he was thinking of Black Silas—*how* had Black Silas chosen? Suddenly he felt uncomfortable, and gave a great sigh of relief as he saw a thin thread of smoke still curling from the shop.

On the bench under the tree sat Black Silas, apparently lost in thought; his hat, an unusual accompaniment, was pulled low on his forehead. The horse instinctively stopped and the judge leaped to the ground before the great body under the tree even stirred.

"I was sorry I had to leave, Silas, but I suppose you and Zeke came out all right," said the judge kindly.

The negro said nothing. Ole marse ignored the silence. More earnestly he looked upon the savage magnificence before him.

"And what *did* you choose at last, Silas?"

The negro turned slowly, facing his master, and as he pushed the hat back from his brow, the setting sun cast high lights upon the great "C" seared upon his forehead.

The master turned away, "God! the mark of Cain! Silas, I am sorry for you." The tone was pitying; he had never heard such an intonation from ole marse before. "I have always been proud of you, proud of your ability, your strength, your manhood."

The negro looked away across the wheat-field.

"Something was wrong; what was it, Silas? Tell me, as between man and man, for, before God, I want to help you, Silas."

The right chord was touched. The giant trembled, heaving a great sob, and as a little child he fell upon his knees just at his master's feet.

"Hit were de gal!" he moaned. "An' *his* dead face keep er-risin' 'twixt me an' the moon, an' I cain't shet hit out. Oh, ole marse, hit were de gal."

The huge figure was shaken with anguish, as the master laid a gentle hand upon the shoulder of the slave. The sun went down in a blaze of crimson glory, and the rosy light faded into a purplish gray.

Day after day the contact with the other negroes had become intolerable, and at last ole marse was petitioned for release from

the shop, and the occupancy of a cabin among the willows, one that was apart and "didn't neighbor nobody," as the petitioner expressed it; and ole marse heartily assented.

As winter came on he gave the lonely man a gun that he might hunt; but the iron-framed man called the squirrels and partridges his brothers and they did not fear his coming, for he left the gun to rust in the corner of his cabin.

They had all gone to the hall but ole marse and baby Ben. In the silence of the big house the old clock in the hall ticked noisily. The judge turned over the briefs of an undecided case. A sleepy mood was stealing over the judicial dignity; the judge leaned his head upon his arm and slept, dangerously near the candles.

Without, the shrill wind was cutting the corners dismally. In the darkness a darker shadow, mammoth and ungainly in the uncertain light, slipped round the house and dropped in a heap within the chimney-lock.

"Des ter be clos't ter ole marse; des ter keep de cole, dead face fo'm risin'," he moaned. "I'se feared! oh, I'se feared, an' hit 'pear lak hit ease if I gits clos't ter ole marse!"

* * * * * * * *

It was after the fire, the great old mansion-house lay in ruins, and ole marse, somewhat pale from the late excitement, was telling of the rescue from the flames.

Again the eager throng was gathered over against the smithy.

"Dat Silas he were strong las' night," said one; "he tote de baby out, an' den ole marse, lak he were des er baby, an' blow de horn, an' don hab mos' ebber't'ing frowed out de house 'fore de niggers kin git dar. Unc' Zeke he say he nebber even lef' de house twel de walls was er-swinging. When dey lays 'im on de grass fer dead, an' pour de water on 'im, dat gal what he done hit all for, come an' des fling herself on 'im, an' she say ef he des don' die, she gwine mairey him in a minute, ef de Lord spar' her."

"Are they all here, Zeke?"

"Yes, sah, all yere," said Unc' Zeke, and the voice of ole marse met the listening ears.

"Without a roof over my head, and almost before the ashes of my

home are cold, I have called you from the field to see justice done to an act of bravery and self-sacrifice. Black Silas!"

The crowd swayed and parted, and Black Silas, almost naked, and towering over his fellows, was led down the narrow aisle until he stood before his master.

There was a touch of pomposity and of pride in ole marse's manner.

"Black Silas, in the name of God, and before these witnesses, I now declare you free!"

The guides dropped back, and Black Silas fell upon his knees.

"Take the bandage off and look me in the face!"

The clothes were removed, and ole marse bent and saw that the lifted eyes were blind. The pomposity was gone, something seemed to quiver in his throat, and the hand he laid upon the negro's head trembled a little.

"Silas," he murmured, "you are free, and to-day I make you a deed to one hundred acres on the northwest of the new field, with mules and men to work your land. Rise," commanded ole marse.

The negro, awed and dazed, mechanically obeyed, and then ole marse shouted:

"Cheer, boys—cheer for the new land-owner of Clayton!"

Such a yell went up that it almost split the throats of those that gave it, and then they led him back again, tradition said, with a great red cross upon his brow; for flame had blotted out forever the fearful brand of murder. But Black Silas only knew that the "gal" he loved held him by the hand.

JOY MEETS LAUGHTER.

ELLA WHEELER WILCOX.

FATE served me meanly! but I looked at her and laughed,
That none might know how bitter was the cup I quaffed.

Along came Joy, and paused beside me where I sat,
Saying: "I came to see what you were laughing at."

DIDDIE, DUMPS AND CHRIS.

LOUISE CLARKE PYRNELLE.

DUMPS was playing in the nursery with Chris, a little negress, when Diddie came in with a big blank-book and a lead-pencil in her hand.

"What's that Diddie?" asked Dumps.

"Now, don't you bother me, Dumps, I'm going to write a book."

"Are you? Who's goin' ter tell yer what ter say?"

"I'm goin' ter make it up out o' my head, all about little girls and boys and ladies."

"I wouldn't have no boys in it, they're always so hateful; there's Cousin Frank broke up my tea-set, an' Johnnie Miller tied er string so tight roun' Cherubin's neck till hit nyearly choked 'im. Ef I was writin' er book, I wouldn't have no boys in it."

"There's boun' ter be boys in it, Dumps; you can't write a book without'n boys; don't you think two pages of this big paper will be long enough for one story."

"Plenty."

So Diddie began to write her first story.

"NETTIE HERBERT."

"Nettie Herbert was a poor little girl."

"Dumps, would you have Nettie Herbert a po' little girl?"

"No, I wouldn't have nobody er po' little girl." Diddie began again.

"Nettie Herbert was a rich little girl, an' she lived with her pa an' ma in a big house in Nu Orlins; an' one time her father give her a gold dollar, an' she went down town an' bort a lot uv things. When she was going along, presently she herd sumbody cryin' an' jes' a-sobbin' hisself most to deaf; an' 'twas a poor little boy all barefooted and jes' as hungry as he could be; an' he said his ma was sick, an' his pa was

dead, an' he had nine little sisters an' seven little bruthers, an' he hadn't had a mouthful to eat in two weeks. So Nettie went to a doctor's house, an' the doctor give her some castor-oil an' parrygorick; an' Nettie give the fyssick to the sick woman an' some candy to take the taste out of her mouth, an' it done her lots of good. Then Nettie went back to the man what sold her the things, an' told him all about it; an' he took 'em all back."

Here Diddie stopped suddenly.

"Dumps, how would you wind up, if you were me?"

"I b'lieve I'd say, she furgive her sisters, an' married the prince, an' lived happy ever afterwards, like 'Cinderilla'."

"Oh, Dumps! I tell you, I b'lieve I'll make a runaway horse run over her goin' home."

"Oh, no, Diddie, please don't. Po' little Nettie, don't make the horse run over her."

"I'm obliged to, Dumps; you mustn't be so tender-hearted."

"I don't want the horse to run over her, Diddie. I think it's bad enough to make her give' way all her things, without lettin' the horses run over her."

But Diddie went on.

"As she was goin' along, presently she herd sumthin' cumin' booker-ty-book, an' ther was a big horse an' a buggy cum tearin' down the road, an' she jes' ran hard as she could; but befo' she could git out er the way, the horse ran rite over her, an' killed her, an' all the people took her up an' carried her home, an' put flowers all on her, an' buried her at the church, an' played the organ 'bout her; an' that's

"*The End of Nettie Herbert.*"

"Oh, dear me! I am tired of writin' books; Dumps, sposin' you make up the nex' story?"

"All right."

"The Bad Little Girl."

"Once pun er time there was a bad little girl, an' she wouldn't min' nobody, nor do no way nobody wanted her to. She skweeled, an' she holler'd, an she kicked, an' she jes' done ev'y bad way she could; an' one time when she was er goin' on like that the spoon slipped

down her throat, an' choked her plum ter death; an' not long after that, when she was er playin' one day—"

"Oh, but, Dumps, you said she was dead."

"No, I nuver said nuthin' 'bout her bein' dead."

"You said the spoon choked her to death."

"Well, hit nuver killed her, anyhow, hit jes' only give her spasums."

"Well, when she was er playin' one day she clim' up on the fender ter git an apple off the mantel-piece; an' the fender turned over, an' she fell in the fire an' burnt all up. An' another time, jes' er week after that, she was er foolin' 'long—"

"Dumps, she couldn't be er foolin' 'long o' nothin' ef she's dead."

"But she ain't dead, Diddie."

"Well, you said the fire burned her up."

"I don't care. She never died 'bout hit, an' ef you're goin' ter keep sayin' she's dead, then I shan't tell yer no more."

"Go on, then."

"Well, one time, when she was er foolin' 'long o' cow, the cow run his horns right through her neck an' throwed her way-ay-ay up yon'er; an' she nuver come down no mo', an' that's all."

"But, Dumps, what become of her?"

"I dunno what become uv her. She went ter hebn, I reckon."

"But she couldn't go ter hebn ef she's so bad. The angels wouldn't let her come in."

"The cow throwed her in, an' the angels wan't er lookin', an' he nuver knowed nuthin' 'bout it."

"That's er mighty funny story, but I'll let it stay in the book. Now Chris, hit's yer turn."

"I kin tell yer 'bout'n de tar baby, ef dat'll do."

"Certainly!" said Dumps. So Chris began:

"The Tar Baby."

"Once pun a time, 'twuz er ole Rabbit an' er ole Fox an' er ole Coon; an' dey all lived close-togedder; an' de ole Fox he had him er mighty fine goober-patch, w'at he nubber 'low noody ter tech; an' one mornin' atter he git up, an' wuz er walkin' 'bout in his gyarden, he seed tracks, an' he foller de tracks, an' he see whar sumbody ben

er grabbin' uv his goobers. An' ev'y day he see de same thing; an' he watch, an' he watch, an' he couldn't nuber cotch nobody! an' he went, he did, ter de coon, an' he sez, sezee, 'Brer Coon, dar's sumbody stealin' uv my goobers.'

"'Well,' sez Brer Coon, sezee, 'I bet yer hit's Brer Rabbit.'

"'I lay I'll fix 'im,' sez Brer Fox; so he goes, he does, an' he tuck'n made er man out'n tar, an' he sot 'im, he did, right in de middle uv de goober-patch. Well, sar, soon ez eber de moon riz, Brer Rabbit, he stole out'n his house, an' he lit right out fur dem goobers; an' by-m-by he sees de tar man er standin' dar, an' he holler out, 'Who'd dat er standin' dar an' er fixin' ter steal Brer Fox's goobers?' Den he lis'en, an' nobody nuver answer, an' he 'gin ter git mad, an' he sez, sezee, 'Yer black nigger, you, yer better answer me wen I speaks ter yer;' an' wid dat he hault off, he did, an' hit de tar baby side dc head, an' his han' stuck fas' in de tar. 'Now, yer better turn me er loose,' sez Brer Rabbit, sezee; 'I got er nuther han' lef',' an' 'ker bum' he come wid his udder han', on de tar baby's tuther jaw, an' dat han' stuck.'

"'Look er hyear! Who yer foolin' wid?' sez Brer Rabbit; 'I got er foot yit.' Den he kick wid all his might, an' his foot stuck. Den he kick wid his udder foot, an' dat stuck. Den Brer Rabbit he 'gun ter git madder 'n he wuz, an' sezee, 'Ef yer fool 'long o' me man, I'll butt de life out'n yer;' an' he hault off wid his head, an' butt de tar baby right in de chin, an' his head stuck. Den dar he wuz! an' dar he had ter stay, till by-m-by, Brer Fox he come er long, an' he seed de Rabbit er stickin' dar, an' he tuck him up, an' he cyard 'im long ter Brer Coon's house, an' he sez, sezee:

"'Brer Coon, hyear's de man wat stole my goobers; now what mus' I do wid him?'

"Brer Coon tuck de Fox off one side, he did, an' he say. 'Le's give 'im his chice, wheder he'd er ruther be tho'd in de fire or de brier-patch; an' ef he say de fire, den we'll fling 'im in de briers; an' ef he say de briers, den we'll fling 'im in de fire.' So they went back ter de Rabbit, an' ax im wheder he'd er ruther be tho'd in de fire or de briers.

"'Oh Brer Fox,' sezee, 'plee-ee-ezze don't tho me in de briers, an' git me all scratched up; ple-ee-ezze tho me in de fire; fur de Lord's sake,' sezee, 'don't tho me in de briers.'

"An' wid that, Brer Fox he lif' 'im up, an' tho'd 'im way-ay-ay over in de briers. Den Brer Rabbit he kick up his heels, he did, an' he laugh, an' he laugh, an' he hollered out:

"'Good-bye, Brer Fox! Fer' yer well, Brer Coon! I wuz born an' riz in de riers!' and wid that he lit right out, he did, an' he nuver stop tell he got clean smack home."

VOICE FROM A FAR COUNTRY.

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THE old couple were very lonely that winter afternoon, though each tried to hide the knowledge of it from the other. It was their daughter's birthday, their only child who had left them to go to the big, glittering world on the other side of the water. There she had won fame with her voice, while they stayed behind in the little village shut in on every side by towering hills, and tried to be cheerful about her.

Usually they succeeded fairly well, at least outwardly, but this day of all others in the year was the hardest to get through with. Even Christmas was not so dreary as this birthday which brought so keenly to their minds memories of other birthdays—the first one, when the baby's coming found them awe-struck with joy and the wonder of it all, and the succeeding years as their treasure grew from babyhood to girlhood, and from a lovable girl to a lovely, graceful woman, when she had vanished from their sight.

They had not seen her since, for money had been scarce and her time valuable. She must work very hard, she wrote them—life seemed far too short for what she hoped to accomplish.

The old couple made a pretense at keeping up a conversation as they sat in the big kitchen that afternoon. The sky was gray and lowering. The first snowstorm of the season was impending, and it promised to be heavy. Presently, after a long silence, during which each had fallen into a reverie of memories, the old man rose.

"Guess I'll git my chores done afore it storms, mother. It's coming on to snow fast."

"All right, father, I'll have supper ready for you when you come in."

"You needn't hurry supper; I thought I'd go to the post-office after I git the critters fed. There might be a letter from Milly."

"All right, father, mebbe there will."

The old man went out and the woman busied herself in the kitchen leisurely preparing supper. Twilight came and the woman lighted an old-fashioned glass lamp and began to set the table in the center of the room, at the same time humming the refrain of a lullaby, and as she sang, she sighed. Presently the door leading to the yard flew open, letting in great gusts of wintry air that very nearly extinguished the light.

"Hurry up and git the door shut, pa," the woman said; "wa'n't there no letter?" Her back was toward her husband as she spoke.

"No, but there's this." And then she turned and saw that he was carrying a wooden box almost too large for him to manage.

"When I went into the office and found there wa'n't no letter I felt considerable disappointed, but when I was comin' by Jones's store, Jones come to the door and says: 'Say, Si, there's a box here for you!'"

"Fur me?" says I.

"Yes," says he. "It come this afternoon by express, and I guess by the looks of it, it's from your daughter in furrin parts."

"So here it is, and now, mother, where's the hatchet?"

"Mother" brought the hatchet and stood by in silence while the box was opened.

"My, what a funny thing. Looks like a small sized sewin' machine, and here's a brass horn, too. I wonder if Milly sent that for a joke."

Silas set the curved case of polished wood on the table and soon had the cover off. The old couple gazed in puzzled astonishment.

"It does look like some kind of a machine. There's something else in the box. Mebbe I'll find some directions."

He lifted out a smaller box inside of which were a number of what looked like rolls of cotton, and as he had prophesied, a paper of instructions.

"It's a p-ho-no-graph, and them things in there air records. Well, I know about as much as I did afore, but it tells just what to do with it, so I'll follow the rules and see what happens. I wisht I knew what 'twas good for. It 'aint no farm implement nor sewin' machine, nor a potato parer."

"Well, it must be good for something, or Milly wouldn't have sent it."

"I can't think o' nothin' it's likely to be except an ear-trumpet. But I see how it's put together, so we can soon find out what it is."

The faces of the old couple were full of interest as Silas touched the spring that set the phonograph in motion. They heard a peculiar buzzing, but nothing wonderful happened, and a look of disappointment was settling on both countenances, when out of the buzzing came the sound of a voice singing. Surprise, amazement, wonder succeeded each other in the two wrinkled faces as the first notes of "Home, Sweet Home," fell on their startled ears.

"Mid pleasures and palaces, tho' we may roam."

They listened breathlessly. Suddenly the woman exclaimed: "Silas, it's Milly singing."

"No, 'taint." But the denial died on his lips as he recognized the familiar tones.

They did not speak again, but stood with clasped hands, their eager hearts drinking in the wealth of song that filled the bare old kitchen while the snow fell silently outside.

"A charm from the skies seems to hallow us there,
Which seek thro' the world is ne'er met with elsewhere."

The words of these lines came with ringing force as though the singer felt the truth and so sang, not to the multitude that thronged each night to listen, but to the two faithful hearts over the sea whose lives were lonely because they could not hear her voice.

As the mother and father listened, it seemed as if Milly, far away in Paris, stretched out her hands to them across the water.

The way she sang the old familiar tune, so simple and so grand, told them she had not forgotten them, and that in the midst of triumphs of success she longed sometimes to be with them again.

"An exile from home splendor dazzles in vain."

The mother's tears were falling fast.

"Home! Home! Sweet, sweet home,
Be it ever so humble, there's no place like home."

The old man's eyes were wet, too, but the tears the father and mother shed were not tears of sorrow, for the sting had gone out of their loneliness, and as the music ceased, peace came and lay like a mantle over the little country home, and the world outside was growing whiter every moment.

TONE OF VOICE.

IT is not so much what you say,
As the manner in which you say it;
It is not so much the language you use,
As the tone in which you convey it.

"Come here!" I sharply said,
And the baby cowered and wept;
"Come here!" I cooed, and he looked and smiled,
And straight to my lap he crept.

The words may be mild and fair,
And the tones may pierce like a dart;
The words may be soft as the summer air,
And the tones may break the heart.

For words but come from the mind
And grow by study and art;
But the tones leap from the inner self,
And reveal the state of the heart.

Whether you know it or not—
Whether you mean or care—
Gentleness, kindness, love, and hate,
Envy and anger are there.

Then would you quarrels avoid,
And in peace and love rejoice?
Keep anger not only out of your words,
But keep it out of your voice.

RENTING A BABY.

FRANK R. STOCKTON.

[Cutting from "Rudder Grange."]

FOR some reason, there seemed to be a continued series of new developments at our house.

The last disturbance was caused by Pomona's baby. I found that if I enjoyed myself, I must do it for the most part alone.

It was not that Euphemia could not go with me, it was simply that she had lost for the time her interest in everything except that baby. I would say to her: "Why can't you let Pomona attend to it? You surely need not give up your whole time and your whole mind to the child."

But she would always answer that Pomona had a great many things to do, and that she could not, at all times, attend to the baby. I once suggested that a nurse should be procured, but at this she laughed: "There is very little to do," she said, "and I really like to do it."

Naturally I was getting tired of this. I could never begin a sentence and feel sure that I would be allowed to finish it. Nothing was important enough to delay attention to an infantile whimper.

Jonas, too, was in a state of unrest! He was obliged to wear his best clothes a great part of the time, for he was continually going on errands to the village, and these errands were so important that they took precedence of everything else. I asked him one day how he liked it all.

"Well," he said reflectively, "I can't say as I understand it exactly. It does seem queer to me that such a little thing should take up pretty nigh all the time of three people. I suppose after a while, that you may be wanting to turn in and help." This remark gave me an idea. I determined, however, to try to reason with Euphemia before I carried out my plan.

"If it was our own baby," I said, "it would be a different thing; but to give yourself up so entirely to Pomona's baby, seems to me

unreasonable; it is reversing all the usages of society for the mistress to take care of the servant's baby."

"The usages of society are not worth much sometimes," said Euphemia, "and you must remember that Pomona is a very different kind of a person from an ordinary servant, and as for the baby it's just as good and pretty as any baby, and it may grow up to be better than any of us. Some of our Presidents have sprung from lowly families."

"But this one is a girl," I said.

"Well, then, she may be a President's wife," said Euphemia."

"Another thing," I remarked, "I don't believe Jonas and Pomona like your keeping their baby so much to yourself."

"Nonsense!" said Euphemia, "a girl in Pomona's position couldn't help being glad to have a lady take an interest in her baby, and help her bring it up."

Then I determined to carry out my plan.

About three miles from our house was a settlement known as New Dublin. It was a cluster of poor and doleful houses, inhabited entirely by Irish people. I was acquainted with one of the matrons of this locality, a Mrs. Duffy, and to her I made a visit.

"Mrs. Duffy, I want to hire a baby, for which I am willing to pay a liberal rental." She was perfectly willing to accommodate me, but feared she had nothing on hand of the age I desired.

"Me childther are all agoin' about, ye can see a poile uv 'em out yon in the road, an' there's more uv' em on the fence; but you need have no fear about gettin' wan, there's sthacks of 'em in the place."

I finally secured a youngish infant, who having been left motherless, was in charge of a neighboring aunt. The child suited me very well, and I agreed to take it for as many days as I might happen to want it, but to pay by the week in advance.

It was a boy with a suggestion of orange red bloom all over its head, and what looked to me like freckles on its cheeks. His eyes were blue and twinkling, and he had "the very mouth for a little poipe," as Mrs. Duffy admiringly remarked.

He was hastily prepared for his trip. "What's his name?" I asked. "It's Pat, afther his dad, who's away in the mines. But ye

can call him onything ye loike, for he don't ansther to his name yit."

I drove slowly home, and Euphemia met me as I entered. "What in the world!" she exclaimed. "This " said I, "is my baby."

"Your—baby! Where did you get it, and what are you going to do with it?"

"I got it in New Dublin," I replied, "and I want it to amuse and occupy me when I am at home."

"Oh!" said Euphemia.

At this moment little Pat gave his first whimper. I immediately began to walk up and down the floor with him, and to sing to him. I did not know any infant music, so I started on an old Methodist tune which was used with the hymn containing the lines:

"Weak and wounded, sick and sore," and I sang:
"Little Patsy, watsy, sat-sy,
Does he feel a little bad?
Me will send and get his bot-toe
He sha'n't have to cry-wy-wy."

Pomona was in spasms of laughter in the kitchen, and Euphemia was trying her best not to laugh at all.

"Who's going to take care of it, I'd like to know?" she said.

"Sometimes me and sometimes Jonas," I sang, still walking up and down the room with a long, slow step, swinging the baby from side to side, very much as if it were grass seed in a sieve, and I were sowing it over the carpet. When the bottle came, I took it and began to feed little Pat.

"Here! give me that child," cried Euphemia, forcibly taking little Pat and the bottle from me, "You'll make it swallow the whole affair. You really don't think that I will consent to your keeping such a creature as this in the house? Take your baby, and please carry it home as quick as you can, for I am certainly not going to take care of him."

"Of course, not," said I, "I'm going to do it myself. He looks sleepy, shall I take him up stairs and lay him on our bed?"

"No, indeed," cried Euphemia, "you can put him on a quilt on the floor until after luncheon, and then you must take him home."

That afternoon I nailed four legs on a small packing-box and made a bedstead for him. This with a pillow in the bottom of it was very comfortable, and instead of taking him home, I borrowed some baby nightclothes from Pomona and set about preparing Pat for the night. This Euphemia would not allow, but silently taking him from me, she put him to bed.

That night little Pat woke up several times and made things unpleasant by his wails. On the first two occasions I got up and walked about, singing impromptu lines to the tune of "weak and wounded," but the third time Euphemia arose and declared that the doleful tune was a good deal worse than the baby's crying, and silenced him herself.

In the morning when I beheld the little pad of orange fur in the box my heart almost misgave me, but as the day wore on my courage rose again. Euphemia scolded and scolded and said she would put on her hat and go for the mother, but I told her the mother was dead, and that seemed to be an obstacle. She took a great deal of care of the child, for she said she would not see an innocent creature neglected; but she did not relax in the least in her attentions to Pomona's baby.

The next day was about the same in regard to infantile incident, but on the day after, on my return from the village, I found Euphemia sitting in our own room with little Pat on her lap. I was astonished at the change in the young rascal. He was dressed from head to foot in a suit of clothes belonging to Pomona's baby; the glowing fuzz on his head was brushed and made as smooth as possible, while his little muslin sleeves were tied up with blue ribbon.

"Don't he look nice?" said Euphemia, "it shows what good clothes will do. He's getting ever so fond of me, ze 'ittle patsy watsy! Look how he laughs! He's just as cunning as can be! There's the other baby crying, and I don't know where Pomona is. Just you mind him a minute, please!" and out she ran. I saw Pat's old shawl lying in a corner. I seized it and rolled him up in it, new clothes and all; I hurried down stairs, climbed into the carriage, whipped up the horse, and sped along to New Dublin.

"An' I'm glad he's back," said the fostering aunt, "for I was a comin' over to tell ye that I've been hearin' from his dad, an' he's a comin' back from the moines, an' I don't know what he'd ha' said if

he'd found his little Pat rinted; but if you ever want to borry him for a while after his dad's gone back, ye can have him rint free; an' it's much obleeged I am to ye, sir, fur dressin' him so fine."

When I reached home, Euphemia met me at the door with Pomona's baby in her arms.

"And so you have given up the little fellow that you were going to do so much for," she said.

"Yes, I have given him up," I replied.

"I suppose you thought he would take up so much of your time, and thought that we couldn't be to each other what we used to be, didn't you?"

"Not exactly, I only thought that things promised to be twice as bad as they were before." She went to the back door of the parlor, opened it and called Pomona. "Here, Pomona, take your baby," she said. Pomona's eyes sparkled as she went out, I saw her hug her child to her breast and cover it with kisses.

"Now, then," said Euphemia, "I suppose you expect me to devote myself to you."

I did expect it, and I was not mistaken.

MODERN MAID.

"WHERE are you going, my pretty maid?"
"I am going to a lecture, sir," she said.

"May I go with you, my pretty maid?"
"Men are not admitted, sir," she said.

"What is the lecture, my pretty maid?"
"The Suppression of Man in the World," she said.

"What is your fortune, my pretty maid?"
"My learning's my fortune, sir," she said.

"Then I can't marry you, my pretty maid."
"Boston girls don't marry, sir," she said.

THE OLD MAN.

EUGENE FIELD.

I CALLED him the Old Man, but he wuzn't an old man; he wuz a little boy—our fust one; 'nd his gran'ma, who'd had a heap of experience in sich matters, allowed that he wuz for looks as likely a child as she'd ever clapped eyes on. Bein' our fust, we sot our hearts on him, 'nd Lizzie named him Willie, for that wuz the name she liked best, havin' had a brother Willyum killed in the war. But I never called him anything but the Old Man, 'nd that name seemed to fit him, for he wuz one of your sollum babies,—alwuz thinkin', 'nd thinkin', 'nd thinkin', like he wuz a jedge, 'nd when he laffed it wuzn't like other children's laffs, it wuz so sad-like.

Lizzie 'nd I made it up between us that when the Old Man growed up we'd send him to collige 'nd give him a lib'ril edication, no matter though we had to sell the farm to do it. But we never cud exactly agree as to what we was goin' to make of him; Lizzie havin' her heart sot on his bein' a preacher like his gran'pa Baker, 'nd I wantin' him to be a lawyer 'nd git rich out'n the corporations, like his uncle Wilson Barlow. So we never come to no definite conclusion as to what the Old Man wuz goin' to be bime by. But while we wuz thinkin' 'nd debatin' the Old Man kep' growin', 'nd growin', 'nd all the time he wuz as serious 'nd sollum as a jedge.

Lizzie got jest wrapt up in that boy; toted him round ever'where 'nd never let on like it made her tired—powerful big 'nd hearty child, too, but heft warn't nothin' 'longside of Lizzie's love for the Old Man. When he caught the measles from Sairy Baxter's baby Lizzie sot up day 'nd night till he wuz well, holdin' his hands 'nd singin' songs to him, 'nd cryin' herself almost to death because she dassent give him cold water to drink when he called f'r it. As for me, *my* heart wuz wrapt up in the Old Man, *too*, but, bein' a man, it wuzn't for me to show it like Lizzie, bein' a woman; 'nd now that the Old Man is—well, now that he has gone, it wouldn't do to let on how much I sot by him, for that would make Lizzie feel all the wuss.

Sometimes, when I think of it, it makes me sorry that I didn't show the Old Man some way how much I wuz wrapt up in him. Used to hold him in my lap 'nd make faces for him 'nd alder whistles 'nd things; sometimes I'd kiss him on his rosy cheek, when nobody wuz lookin'; oncet I tried to sing him a song, but it made him cry, 'nd I never tried my hand at singin' again.

But, somehow, the Old Man didn't take to me like he took to his mother; would climb down outern my lap to git where Lizzie wuz; would hang on to her gownd, no matter what she wuz doin',—whether she was makin' bread, or sewin', or puttin' up pickles, it wuz alwuz the same to the Old Man—he wuzn't happy unles he wuz right there, clost beside his mother.

Most all boys, as I've heern tell, is proud to be round with their father, doin' what *he* does 'nd wearin' the kind of clothes *he* wears. But the Old Man wuz diff'rent; he allowed that his mother wuz his best friend, 'nd the way he stuck to her—wall, it has alwuz been a great comfort to Lizzie to recollect it.

The Old Man had a kind of confidin' way with his mother. Every oncet in a while, when he'd be playin' by hisself in the front room, he'd call out, "Mudder, mudder," and no matter where Lizzie wuz,—in the kitchen, or in the wood-shed, or in the yard, sh'd answer: "What is it, darlin'?" Then the Old Man 'ud say: "'Tum here, mudder, I wanter tell you sumfin'." Never could find out what the Old Man wanted to tell Lizzie; like's not he didn't wanter tell her nothin', maybe he wuz lonesome 'nd jest wanted to feel that Lizzie wuz round. But that didn't make no difference; it wuz all the same to Lizzie. No matter where she wuz, or what she wuz a-doin', jest as soon as the Old Man told her he wanted to tell her somethin' she dropped ever'-thing else 'nd went straight to him. Then the Old Man would laff one of his sollum, sad-like laffs, 'nd put his arms 'round Lizzie's neck 'nd whisper—or pertend to whisper—somethin' in her ear, 'nd Lizzie would laff 'nd say, "Oh, what a nice secret we have atween us!" 'nd then she would kiss the Old Man 'nd go back to her work.

Time changes all things,—all things but memory, nothin' can change *that*. Seems like it wuz only yesterday or the day before that I heern the Old Man callin', "Mudder, mudder, I wanter tell you sumfin'."

'nd that I seen him put his arms around her neck 'nd whisper softly to her.

It had been an open winter, 'nd there wuz fever all around us. The Baxters lost their little girl, 'nd Homer Thompson's children had all been taken down. Ev'ry night 'nd mornin' we prayed God to save our darlin'; but one evenin' when I come up from the wood-lot, the Old Man wuz restles, 'nd his face wuz hot 'nd he talked in his sleep. Maybe you've been through it yourself,—maybe you've tended a child that's down with the fever; if so, maybe you know what we went through, Lizzie 'nd me. The doctor shook his head one night when he come to see the Old Man; we knew what that meant. I went outdoors,—I couldn't stand it in the room there, with the Old Man seein' 'nd talkin' about things that the fever made him see. I wuz too big a coward to stay 'nd help his mother to bear up; so I went outdoors 'nd brung in wood,—brung in wood enough to last all spring,—'nd then I sat down alone by the kitchen fire 'nd heard the clock tick 'nd watched the shadows flicker through the room.

I remember Lizzie's comin' to me and sayin': "He's breathin' strange like, 'nd his little feet is cold as ice." Then I went into the front chamber where he lay. The day wuz breakin'; the cattle wuz lowin' outside; a beam of light come through the winder 'nd fell on the Old Man's face,—perhaps it wuz the summons for which he waited 'nd which shall sometime come to me 'nd you. Leastwise the Old Man roused from his sleep 'nd opened up his big blue eyes. It wuzn't me he wanted to see.

"Mudder! mudder!" cried the Old Man, but his voice warn't strong 'nd clear like it used to be. "Mudder, where *be* you, mudder?"

Then, breshin' by me, Lizzie caught the Old Man up 'nd held him in her arms, like she had done a thousand times before.

"What is it, darlin'? *Here* I be," says Lizzie.

"Tum here," says the Old Man,—"tum here; I wanter tell you sumfin'."

The Old Man went to reach his arms around her neck 'nd whisper in her ear. But his arms fell limp 'nd helpless-like, 'nd the Old Man's curly head dropped on his mother's breast.

MORTIFICATION OF THE FLESH.

PAUL LAURENCE DUNBAR.

NATHAN FOSTER and his life-long friend and neighbor, Silas Bollender, sat together side by side upon the line-fence that separated their respective domains. They were both whitling away industriously, and there had been a long silence between them. Nathan broke it, saying, "'Pears to me like I've had oncommon good luck this year."

"Wall, you have had good luck, there ain't no denyin' that. It 'pears as though you've been ee-specially blest."

"An' I know I ain't done nothin' to deserve it."

"No, o' course not. Don't take no credit to yoreself, Nathan. We don't none of us deserve our blessin's, however we may feel about our crosses; we kin be purty shore o' that."

"Now, look, my pertater vines was like little trees, an' nary a bug on 'em."

"An' you had as good a crop o' corn as I've ever seen raised in this part o' Montgomery County."

"Yes, an' I sold it, too, jest before that big drop in the price."

"After givin' away all the turnips you could, you had to feed 'em to the hogs."

"My fruit-trees jest had to be propped up, an' I've got enough perserves in my cellar to last two er three winters, even takin' into consideration the drain o' church socials an' o' cherity."

"Yore chickens air fat an' sassy, not a sign o' pip among 'em."

"Look at them cows in the fur pasture. Did you ever see anything to beat 'em fur sleekness?"

"Wall, look at the pasture itself; it's most enough to make human bein's envy the critters. You didn't have a drop o' rain on you while you was gettin' yore hay in, did you?"

"Not a drop."

"An' I had a whole lot ruined jest as I was about to rick it."

So, alternately, they went on enumerating Nathan's blessings until it seemed that there was nothing left for him to desire.

"Silas, sich luck as I'm a-havin' is achilly skeery; it don't seem right."

"No, it don't seem right fur a religious man like you, Nathan. Ef you was a hard an' graspin' sinner, it 'ud' be jest makin' you top heavy so's yore fall 'u'd be the greater."

"I don't know but what that's it, anyhow. Mebbe I'm a-gittin' puffed up over my goods without exactly knowin' it."

"Mebbe so, mebbe so. Them kind o' feelin's is mighty sneaky comin' on a body. O' course, I ain't seen no signs of it yit in you; but it 'pears to me you'll have to mortify yore flesh yit to keep from bein' purse-proud."

"Mortify the flesh?"

"O' course, you can't put peas in yore shoes er git any of yore friends to lash you, so you'll have to find some other way o' mortifyin' yore flesh. Wall, fur my part, I don't need to look fur none, fur I never had too many blessin's in my life, less'n you'd want to put the children under that head."

Silas shut up his jack-knife with a snap and, laughing, slid down on his side of the fence. In serious silence Nathan Foster watched him go stumping up the path towards his house.

"Silas seems to take everything so light in this world," he breathed half aloud. "I wonder how he can do it."

With Nathan, now, it was just the other way. Throughout his eight and forty years he had taken every fact of life with ponderous seriousness. Entirely devoid of humor, he was a firm believer in signs, omens, tokens, and judgments.

Though the two men had grown up together and been friends from a boyhood spent upon their fathers' farms, their lives had been two very different stories. Silas, looking on everything cheerily, had married early and was the father of a houseful of children. His wife ruled him with a rod of iron, but he accepted her domination quite as a matter of course and went merrily on his way. He had never been a very successful man, but he managed to hold the old homestead and feed and clothe his family. This seemed entirely to satisfy him.

On the other hand, to Nathan marriage had always seemed an undertaking fraught with so much danger that he had feared to embark upon it, and although in his younger days his heart had often burned within him when he had contemplated some charming damsel, these heart-burnings had gone unknown to any one but himself until some one else had led the girl to the altar.

He was a religious man, and with the vision of Dives in his mind, his wealth oppressed and frightened him. He gave to his church and gave freely.

As usual, he had taken his friend's bantering words in hard earnest and was turning them over in his mind.

The next morning when Nathan and Silas met to compare notes, the former began:

"I have been thinking over what you said last night, Silas, about me mortifying my flesh, and it seems to me like a good idee. I wrasselled in prayer last night, and it was shown to me that it wa'n't no more'n right fur me to make some kind o' sacrifice fur the mercies that's been bestowed upon me."

"Wall, I don't know, Nathan; burnt-offerings air a little out now."

"I don't mean nothin' like that; I mean some sacrifice of myself, some—"

His sentence was broken in upon by a shrill voice that called from Silas Bollender's kitchen door:

"Si, you'd better be gittin' about yore work instid o' standin' over there a-gassin' all the mornin'. I'm shore I don't have no time to stand around."

"All right, Mollie; speakin' of mortifyin' the flesh an' makin' a sacrifice of yourself, Nathan, why don't you git married?"

Nathan started.

"Then, you see, you'd be shore to accomplish both. Fur pure mortification of the flesh, I don't know of nothin' more thorough-goin' er effectiver than a wife. Also she is a vexation of the sperit. Look at me an' Mis' Bollender, fur instance. Do you think I need a hair shirt when I think I'm gittin' over-fed? No. Mis' Bollender keeps me with a meek an' subdued sperit. You raaly ought to marry, Nathan."

"Do you think so?"

"It looks to me that that 'u'd be about as good a sacrifice as you could make, an' then it's sich a lastin' one."

"I don't believe that you realize what you air a-sayin', Silas. It's a mighty desprit step that you're advisin' me to take."

Again Mrs. Bollender's voice broke in:

"Si, air you goin' to git anything done this mornin', er air you goin' to stand there an' hold up that fence fur the rest o' the day?"

"Nathan, kin you stand here an' listen to a voice an' a speech like that an' then ask me ef I realize the despritness of marriage?"

"It's desprit, but who'd you advise me to marry, Silas, ef I did,—that is, ef I did make up my mind to marry,—an' I don't jest see any other way."

"Oh, I ain't pickin' out wives fur anybody, but it seems to me that you might be doin' a good turn by marryin' the Widder Young. The Lord 'u'd have two special reasons fur blessin' you then; fur you'd be mortifyin' yore flesh an' at the same time a-helpin' the widder an' orphans."

Nathan turned his honest gray eyes upon his friend as he said: "That's so." He couldn't admit to Silas that he had been thinking hard of the Widow Young even before he had thought of mortifying his flesh with a wife.

The widow was a lively, buxom woman who had seen forty summers pass. She had been one of the prettiest and most industrious girls of the village, and it had seemed that Nathan, when a young man, had serious intentions towards her. But his extreme caution had got the better of his inclination, and she had married a ne'er-do-weel, and until the day of his death, leaving her with two children on her hands, she had need of all her thrift.

Nathan thought of the good his money would do the struggling woman, of the brightness it would bring into her life, and murmured, "Wall, it's good, I'll be killin' two birds with one stone."

Once decided. it did not take him long to put his plans into execution. But he called Silas over to the fence that evening after he had dressed to pay a visit to the widow.

"Wall, Silas, I've determined to take the step you advised."

"Humph, you made up yore mind quick, Nathan."

"I don't know as it's any use a-waitin'; ef a thing's to be done, it ought to be done an' got through with. What I want partic'lar to know now is, whether it wouldn't be best to tell Lizzie—I mean the widder—that I want her as a means of mortification."

"Wall, no, Nathan, I don't know as I would do that jest yit; I don't believe it 'u'd be best."

"But ef she don't know, wouldn't it be obtainin' her under false pertenses ef she said 'yes'?"

"Not exactly the way I look at it, fur you've got more motives fur marryin' than one."

"What! Explain yoreself, Silas, explain yoreself."

"I mean you want to do her good as well as subdue yore own sperit."

"Oh, yes, that's so."

"Now, no woman wants to know at first that she's a vexation to a man's sperit. It sounds scriptural, but is don't sound nooptial. Now, look at me an' Mis' Bollender. I never told her untell we'd been married more'n six months; but she didn't believe it then, an' she won't believe it tell this day."

"Wall, I'll agree not to tell her right away, but ef she consents, I must tell her a week or so after we are married. It'll ease my conscience. Ef I could tell her now, it 'u'd be a heap easier in gittin' 'round to the question. I don't know jest how to do it without."

"Oh, you won't have no trouble in makin' her understand. Matrimony's a subjic' that woman air mighty keen on. They can see that a man's poppin' the question ef he only half tries. You'll git through all right."

Somewhat strengthened, Nathan left his friend and sought the widow's house. He found her stitching merrily away under the light of a coal-oil lamp with a red shade.

"La, Nathan, who'd 'a' expected to see you up here? You've got to be sich a home body that no one don't look to see you outside o' yore own field an' garden."

"I jest thought I'd drop in," said Nathan.

"Wall, it's precious kind o' you, I'm shore. I was a-feelin' kind o' lonesome. The children go to bed with the chickens."

"I jest thought I'd drop in."

"Wall, it does remind me of old times to see you jest droppin' in, informal like, this way. My, how time does fly!"

Here they found a common subject, and the talk went on more easily, aided by story and reminiscence, until Nathan found that two hours had passed without his getting any nearer to his object. He decided that his time had come. He sighed, cleared his throat, and began:

"Widder, I've been thinkin' a good deal lately; I've been greatly prospered in my day; in fact 'my cup runneth over.'"

"You have been prospered, Nathan."

"Seems's ef—seems's ef I'd ought to sheer it with somebody, don't it?"

"Wall, Nathan, I don't know nobody that's more generous in givin' to the pore than you air."

"I don't mean jest exactly that way. I mean—widder, you're the morti—I mean the salvation of my soul. Could you—would you—er—do you think you'd keer to sheer my blessin's with me—an' add another one to 'em?"

The Widow Young looked at him in astonishment; then the tears filled her eyes and she asked, "Do you mean it, Nathan?"

"I wouldn't 'a' spent so much labor on a joke, widder."

"No, it don't seem like you would, Nathan. Well, it's sudden, mighty sudden, but I can't say 'no.'"

"Fur these an' all other blessin's make us truly thankful, oh Lord," said Nathan devoutly. And he sat another hour with the widow making plans for the early marriage, on which he insisted.

The widow had been settled in Nathan's home over a month before he had even thought of telling her of the real motive of his marriage, and every day from the time it occurred to him it grew harder for him to do it.

One night when he had been particularly troubled he sought his friend and counsellor with a clouded brow. They sat together in their accustomed place on the fence.

"I'm bothered, Silas."

"What's the matter?"

"Why, there's several things. First off, I ain't never told the widder that she was a mortification, an' next, she ain't. I look around at that old house o' mine that ain't been a home sence mother used to scour the hearth, an' it makes me feel like singin' fur joy. An' I hear them children playin' around me—they're the beatenest children; that youngest one called me daddy yistiddy—well, I see them playin' around an' my eyes air opened, an' I see that the widder's jest another blessin' added to the rest. It looks to me like I had tried to cheat the Almighty."

Silas took out his pipe and filled it, then between whifs he said:

"Wall, now, Nathan, I don't know as you've got any cause to feel bothered. You've done yore duty. Ef you've tried to mortify yore flesh an' it refused to mortify, why, that's all you could do, an' I believe the Lord'll take the will fur the deed an' credit you accordin'ly."

"*Mebbe* so, Silas, mebbe *so*."

ADAPTABLE POEM.

TOM MASSON.

THEY stood befo e the open grate
(For summer substitute a gate);
She was a blonde (if you prefer,
Why, make a brunette out of her).
He spoke of love (they all do that),
And she? Her heart went pit-a-pat;
The speed, why you yourself can fix,
From seventy up to ninety-six.
She hung her head, she blushed, she sighed,
She laughed, or possibly she cried,
Just take your choice and have her do
Precisely as you wish her to.
She did et cetera until
Her George, or Jack, or Jim, or Will,
Or any name you like the best—
But why go on? You know the rest.

CRUCIAL TEST.

MATT CRIM.

IT was down on the Altamaha where the Dugarres always spent the summers in their large, old-fashioned mansion, on their own plantation. An unusually large party lounged on the shady piazza one hot, languid summer afternoon. It was too warm for exertion, all quiet amusements had flagged, and even conversation had become a stupid effort, when Mark Livingston brought out Stedman's poem "Hebe." It roused lively comments, all agreeing in their condemnation of Florina's revenge, so summary and so terrible. Did I say all? There was one exception—Valentine Dugarre. But some of them looked upon her as half savage, because of her Brazilian birth, and her perfectly frank way of speaking out her thoughts and feelings. The Dugarres themselves were half afraid of her and rejoiced when she became engaged to Frank Black, a handsome young Savannahian of good family but of rather weak, unstable nature

She was an imperial-looking girl who set at open defiance all forms and rules, and laughed contemptuously at the conventionalities of society.

"I quite approve of Florina's revenge," she said, "only I would have killed the woman also." Then she smiled with scornful contempt to see the blood forsaking Helen Lawrence's face.

"Why do you turn pale, Miss Lawrence?"

"I—because it is horrible to hear you talk so."

It was known by all in the house that the young Brazilian was jealous of her.

"Miss Dugarre does not mean it," said Mark Livingston.

"I do mean it. What right had she to come between them, to use all her smooth little ways and arts to make him faithless? Yes, by all means, Hebe should have feasted upon her first."

She glanced at her lover, but he was looking intently across the sunlit cotton-fields. "There is an untamed savage in every heart,

no matter how finely the owner of that heart may be civilized, how highly polished."

"There is also a spirit of divinity, Miss Dugarre," answered Livingston.

"Is it not true that many a life of noble deeds has been wrecked in a moment of passion, the man stripped of his goodness, as of a garment, leaving the naked savage, fierce, revengeful?"

"But if there are such instances, so we can as easily recall others, where men and women in moments of supreme sorrow, or danger, have so far risen above all personal feeling as to be willing, nay eager, to help their worst enemies."

Valentine turned to her lover. "What do you think, Frank?"

"That it is too warm for argument, and that Mark might have selected less tragical reading for our amusement."

He laughed a little as he spoke, and rising, walked away into the hall. Valentine rose and followed him into the cool, duskily shadowed library.

"Dearest, did I disgust you with my savage talk?"

"I do not like such sentiments from you, Valentine. It does not sound womanly, and those people criticize you severely enough as it is."

"What do I care for their good opinion?"

"It is well for us to care for everybody's good opinion."

"Miss Lawrence has taught you that great and noble truth, has she? You have grown very critical of my speech and manners yourself since she came among us. Frank, Frank! what is coming between us?"

"Your jealous imagination, Valentine. A man does not like to be doubted, frowned upon, every time he speaks to, or looks at, another woman."

"Is that all? Tell me, on your honor?"

"Yes," he said; but his eyes shifted under her eager gaze.

"I *am* a miserable, jealous creature, all fire and wicked temper; but, unfortunately for me, I love you with all my heart, instead of just a little bit of it, and it is a great strong heart, dearest, if it is wayward and untamed."

She leaned toward him with luminous eyes. He raised her arms

to his neck, and kissed her on lips and eyes. "How can I help loving you, my princess?" he whispered.

They had a little dance at Dugarre that night, and to add to the picturesqueness of the fine old house and grounds the negroes built a great bonfire on the lawn. It was acknowledged that Valentine Dugarre and Helen Lawrence carried off the palm of beauty. Valentine appeared at her best. She even smiled approval when Black led Helen out on the floor and danced with her. If he had stopped at that! But he asked her after the dance to walk on the piazza with him.

They walked its length, and then Black drew Helen into the deserted library. It was on the very spot where a few hours before he had given Valentine such assurance of his love. The remembrance stung him to shame, but it could not silence his tongue. His love for Valentine had been an infatuation, but Helen held his heart. Valentine was not the woman to make him happy, with her jealous, tempestuous moods and passionate temper.

"But you, you are an angel of sweetness and goodness," he said, kissing her hands passionately. Helen shivered a little.

"What if she should hear you?" she said, trembling, yet leading him on with her soft eyes, her half-yielding manner.

"Why speak of her, think of her, now? My bondage is not yet hopeless, and I—I cannot help loving you."

Helen's emotion nearly distracted him. Still rasher words trembled on his lips, when—

"Is this tableau for the benefit of the public, or only for your own amusement?" Valentine stood there, white as her dress, and with eyes that were terrible in their rage and anguish.

"Mr. Black will be perfect in the art of lovemaking if he continues his present rôle. You need not tremble, and look as if you'd like to run away, Miss Lawrence. There is no Hebe here to crunch your delicate bones, richly as you deserve such a fate, and willingly as I would give you to it."

"Blame me for it all, Valentine, not her," exclaimed Black.

"So you would protect and defend her? What a chivalrous gentleman; what a man of honor! Do you think I have been blind and deaf to the sighs and glances, to the thousand little arts she has used

upon you—she, the example that has been held up to me by my aunt as worthy of imitation? Well, I congratulate her on the conquest she has made. Two months ago you were ready to grovel at my feet, and to-day—yes, only a few hours ago you said you loved me; and I believed you. I would like to kill you both; yes, with my own hands!"

"Hush, for Heaven's sake! Do you want all those people to hear?"

"Oh, no! It doesn't, of course, make any difference if you break my heart, but it would be shocking for the world to know it. I will hush, and leave you to console and reassure Miss Lawrence; but do not expect me to break our engagement. You shall never be free until I die—never."

And then she left them, disappearing through the open window as swiftly and noiselessly as she had come. Livingston met her on the piazza.

"Don't—don't cry, Valentine. He is not worth a tear."

"I know his worth; but that cannot alter my feelings now I love him."

"And I—I love you, Valentine, even as you love him."

"Then I pity you." She laughed tremulously, crushing up folds of her gown in her hands. "I'd like to kill them, I would, indeed."

"You could not do them any violence, Valentine, were it really in your power. I know your generous, noble nature better than that."

But she turned from him.

* * * * * * * *

Nobody could ever tell just how it happened. The theory was that it caught from some of those vagrant sparks flying up from the bonfire, but deep in the darkness and silence of that night, a little tongue of fire shot up from the roof, growing larger and brighter until its light shone far across the river.

It was Valentine, who, turning on her pillow, saw the strange illumination, and, springing up, discovered its cause. She ran through the halls, waking the slumbering people. All fled for their lives from the old house, which burned like so much tinder. The great trees surrounding it were shriveled in the heat, and falling flakes of fire set barns and stables ablaze. The low clouds caught the lurid reflection and the river shone like a mirror, while along the horizon the darkness

was so intense, so thick and inky black, that it seemed as if all the night had been compressed into it.

And then, from group to group, ran a cry for Miss Lawrence. Men and women looked at one another with blanched faces and eyes of horror.

"It would be death to go in there now," said one man.

But death or not, one had gone, running across the lawn, up the steps, and into the clouds of smoke—Valentine Dugarre. Black and Livingston would have followed her, but were forcibly restrained. In a few moments a joyful shout drew all to the side of the house, where they saw Valentine at a window, with Helen half fainting at her side. She helped her through the window, and those below could hear her eager words of encouragement as Helen dropped safely down to the hands outstretched to receive her.

"Now, Valentine, quickly, dear," cried Livingston.

But it was too late. A volume of flame seemed to burst up at her very feet. Out of that fiery nimbus her face shone for a moment, and then with a creaking of burning timbers and a great flare of light, the whole building fell in.

THE NEW TENOR.

EUGENE FIELD.

HE drew his breath with a gasping sob,
With a quavering voice he sang;
But his voice leaked out and could not drown
The accompanist's clamorous bang.

He lost his pitch on the middle A,
And he faltered on lower D—
And he foundered at length like a battered wreck,
Adrift on the wild, high C!

DOG AND THE CARAMEL.

J. G. PARMENTER.

WHEN Mr. Popp came from New York the other day, he brought a dog. He was a sober looking dog with a smooth white hide covered with what looked like gigantic freckles. His ears were long and flabby and his eyes were sad. His tail had a habit of retiring from the public gaze as though, at some time in his early life, he had had a bitter altercation with a mule.

Mrs. Popp, who lived in dread of hydrophobia, was only reconciled to the dog when Mr. Popp said: "It gives such a tone to a gentleman's place to see a splendid great dog wandering about," and "he will scare tramps away."

Well, everything went along quietly enough until one hot morning. Johnny Popp, aged nine, went down to the corner grocery to buy some caramels. When he got home again the dog was lying down in the yard, lazily absorbing the flies which hovered about his nose. Mrs. Popp was laying out a bed in her garden to plant some sunflowers in. Johnny went up to the dog and offered him a caramel, and the dog merely glanced at it out of the corner of his eye and suddenly made a snap at it in such a way that made Mrs. Popp give a little shriek, and say she hoped "that the hot weather hadn't affected his temper."

Then Mrs. Ragg, who lived next door, looked over the fence and said that she had just heard that Perceval de Schuster and Almirene Blotter had eloped, and Mrs. Popp said, "you don't say," and went to the fence to talk it over. She was startled just at the place where "Old Blotter threatened to bray Perceval de Schuster in a mortar if he came round the house again, and Almirene said she was her Perceval's forever, and that nothing save death should part them," by Johnny, who came up with the remark that he thought the dog must be sick. On looking round, Mrs. Popp saw the animal lying in about the same place where she had left him, but going through very peculiar motions. Every once in a while he would try to dig his paw in the asphalt walk

and bracing himself for a tremendous effort, he would give his head an upward jerk which threatened to throw it into the next county. Then he would stop to meditate on the flexibility of his spinal column and do the same thing over again.

Mrs. Popp only waited to see him go through with his performance once. Then with a shriek of "hydrophobia" she mounted a tall step-ladder standing near her, and, gathering her skirts about her, proceeded to arouse the neighborhood by screaming "police" and "fire."

Pretty soon a crowd began to collect outside the fence and to make remarks on the fatal cases of hydrophobia which they had heard of and various methods of cure.

"Send for Mr. Popp! oh! do send for Mr. Popp! Oh!–h–h–e–e!" screamed Mrs. Popp, as the dog began to turn double sommersaults and do handsprings and cartwheels, all this time not uttering a sound, but apparently endeavoring with set teeth and starting eyes to shake his head off.

"Got a fit," said the butcher, who had stopped his wagon to see the fun. "Play on him with the hose." "That's it, that'll do the business," said the crowd. Johnny immediately organized a fire-brigade among the boys, and with shouts of "now then, jump her, boys," and the like, they charged into the yard with the reel of garden hose and attaching it to the plug they turned the water on.

The instant the stream struck the dog he made a rush and crawled under the step-ladder. Mrs. Popp went up two or three steps higher, and as the stream followed the dog he started to change his quarters. Alas! for Mrs. Popp! in some way or other the step-ladder shut together, and just as Mr. Popp entered the front gate he saw a confused mixture of step-ladder and dog and Mrs. Popp in violent commotion on the ground, while shrieks from the bystanders and the sight of a young man in tight lavender pants and cutaway coat, who had sprung to the rescue of Mrs. Popp, set him wild.

"I'll teach you to assault my wife, you miserable hairpin!" he screamed, as he made a rush for the young man.

Somehow or other the young man, who had by accident stepped on the hose and kept the water from coming out for a moment, removed

his foot. At the same moment the dog extricated himself from the remains of the step-ladder and ran between the young man's legs. There was a good exhibition of ground and lofty tumbling, and in addition, the water, released from confinement, struck Mr. Popp full in the face. "O! Gehenna!" roared Mr. Popp, and then he sat down on the dog who had, in his terrible excitement, succeeded in getting his jaws unlocked, and now, thoroughly mad, closed his teeth on that part of Mr. Popp's anatomy most convenient to him, and with a piece of his master's new fifteen dollar pants in his mouth, made a bee-line for the crowd. A policeman fired at him as he passed, but the dog simply made a snap at his legs and went down the street at a Maud S. gait, while a small boy was taken into a druggist's to have the bullet extracted from his leg. The policeman gallantly rushed into the yard and helped to drag Mrs. Popp out of the melee, while a bystander shut off the water and one other policeman separated Mr. Popp and the young man who had been rolling over each other on the ground, tearing out hair, etc.

After Mrs. Popp had recovered from her hysterics sufficiently to give a coherent account of the affair to the coroner, who had been summoned in hot haste by one of the crowd, Mr. Popp and the young man shook hands and went to the neighboring saloon to repair damages.

Mr. Popp has never seen his pet again, and froths at the mouth at the mention of the word "dog." Johnny was overheard to say to Tommy Ragg that he knew a way to have lots of fun with a dog, and when Tommy asked "how," he answered, "give him a caramel and stick his jaws together."

COUGH AND COIFFURE.

CAMILLA J. KNIGHT.

LADY MARY had a wig, a most elaborate coiffure;
Lady Mary also had a most distressing cough. "You
Doff your coiffure!" said a toff—thus scoffing at her coiffure—
"Doff your coiffure! If you cough, you'll cough your coiffure off you!"

SOMBRE.

(Pronounced "Sombray.")

WILLIAM WETMORE STORY.

LONG, golden beams from the setting sun swept over the plains of Andalusia, and fell upon the Geralda tower of the great cathedral of Sevilla, many miles in the distance. In their path they illumed a stretch of vast pastures enclosed by whitened stone walls, and dotted with magnificent cattle. In a far corner of one of the enclosures the figure of a young girl passed through an arched stone gateway. As she paused to look upon the scattered groups of grazing beasts, the level rays played in lights and shadows upon the waving masses of dark chestnut hair, richly health-tinted young face, creamy neck, and large, lustrous eyes now painfully dry, as if tears were exhausted. She gazed from group to group, calling eagerly, "Sombre! Sombre!"

A pair of long, gleaming horns rose abruptly amid the browsing herd, and a magnificent bull came towards her at a brisk trot. The sunbeams glinted upon his dark coat as it swelled and sank under the play of powerful muscles. His neck and shoulders were leonine in massive strength, the legs and hind-quarters as sleek and symmetrical as those of a race-horse, but his ferociousness was held in check by that devoted love dumb animals express for those who love them.

In a moment the young girl's white arms were thrown around the animal's dusky neck, and her cheek was lain against the silken skin. "Oh, Sombre!" she murmured, "do you know what they are going to do with you? Papa wants to send you to the Plaza de Toros! I have begged him in vain to spare you. Does he think after Anita has brought you up from a tiny calf to be such a beautiful, dear toro that she can give you to the cruel matador to be tortured, made crazy and killed!"

She was sobbing bitterly, and the devoted beast was striving vainly to turn his head far enough to lick the fair neck bending down upon his.

Presently the sobbing ceased, and she stroked the strong shoulders with her small hand.

"Never fear, Sombre, if they take you to Sevilla Anita will find a way to save you! Now, say good night."

Sombre thrust out his huge tongue and licked the little hand and arms. Then she bent forward and kissed him on the frowning, furry forehead and departed.

Anita's path homeward lay through another field where a herd of cattle was being driven. A young herdsman, riding a strong horse in brisk canter, saw the young girl enter from the adjoining pasture. With joyful exclamation in English he rode towards her calling, "Anita, have you seen the posters?"

Waiting until he reached her side, with bated breath she asked, "Is–is Sombre advertised?"

"Yes, on the outer gateway. But here I have a poster in my pocket."

Plaza de Toros de Sevilla
May 17.
Anniversary of the King's Birthday,
Six Bulls to be Killed,
The two magnificent brother bulls
Sol and Sombre,
and others very ferocious,
against
The intrepid Matadores,
Lariato, the American, and
Amador, of Sevilla.

"It is cruel of them, cruel! [Reading.] 'Lariato, the American.' Why, that is yourself! You will spare him! You will spare my Sombre!"

"They do not permit me to fight Don Alonzo's bulls, for I raise them and they would not fight me. Amador will fight Sombre."

"No, no! You must fight Sombre. That wicked Amador will kill him!"

"But so would I, Anita, or be killed by him!"

Anita was silent for a time; suddenly she exclaimed: "Orlando, do you love me well enough to put faith in a promise which will seem impossible of fulfilment?"

"God knows I do!"

"Then listen; if Sombre goes to the Plaza de Toros, you must fight him and spare him, even though they hiss and jeer at you."

"Death is easier. Perhaps the managers will let me fight him, for you have raised him, and I can tell them that I have scarcely seen him. I will fight him, Anita, and for your sake I will let him kill me!"

"No, no, Orlando, for this is my promise, even in the last extremity Sombre shall not harm you!"

"And then, Anita!"

"Then I will leave my father's house and go to you. We will buy Sombre and go to those plains in your country you love so to tell about. You will become a ranch hero, and Sombre shall be the patriarch of our herd!"

"I have tried that once and failed!"

"Ah, but you had neither Sombre nor Anita then!" And waving him a kiss she ran off across the field.

On the 17th of May, in the Plaza de Toros, there was a murmur from thousands of throats like the magnified hum of bees. Amador of Sevilla had killed several bulls and now there was a short intermission. In a stall of the lowest tier sat Anita alone. Presently a band of music began a stately march, and under a high stone archway a long procession advanced. First, gaudily caparisoned picadors on blindfolded studs, two by two, separated and came to a halt, facing the center, with long lances abreast. Then red-coated toreadors carrying long barbs, with brilliant streamers of ribbon, grouped themselves near the heavy closed doors of the bull-pen; finally, the capeadors in yellow satin, carrying flaming red capes on their arms, filed around like the mounted picadors and stood between their studs.

The music ceases, the murmur of voices dies away, and the gates of the bull-pen were thrown open. At a quick trot, a great black bull dashed in, receiving in his shoulders as he passed the toreador's two short barbs. Anita gripped her chair and gasped "Sombre!"

Coming from a darkened pen, Sombre had trotted eagerly forward, expecting to find himself once more in his loved pastures, but he paused, bewildered in the glare of light. Hither and thither he turned in nervous abruptness, his head raised high, his tail slowly lashing his

flanks. Then he lowered his grand head and snipped the earth, and then he smelled fresh, warm blood, the blood of his own kind. With gathering rage he lowered his keen horns close to the ground and gave a deep, hoarse bellow of defiance, flinging clod after clod with his forefeet high above his back. Then there flaunted towards him a red object at which he charged, but it swept aside, and a new sting of pain was felt in his neck, and warm blood was trickling over his glossy skin. Again and again he charged, but each time the red thing vanished and there was more pain, more torturing barbs that maddened him.

Presently a horseman advanced with lowered spear. Surely horse and rider could not vanish. Ah, no! Sombre found that it was not intended that they should. Rushing upon them he struck them with such a blow that they were forced backwards twenty feet and both gave a scream of pain. The picador was dragged away with a broken leg, and the horse lay lifeless, for Sombre's horn had pierced its heart. Instantly a great cry went up from that crater of humanity, "Bravo! Bravo Toro! Bravo Sombre!"

More than once he earned that grand applause, then his tormentors disappeared and through one of the archways advanced a young man tall and athletic. On his left arm hung a scarlet mantle, and in his right hand he carried a long keen sword. Passing under the archway, the matador swept his sword in military salute, then with lowered point he stepped into the arena and faced his antagonist. Upon all fell an awful silence, for Lariato and Sombre were met in a struggle to the death!

For a time the combatants stood motionless, eying each other intently. Then came stealthy movements, hither and thither, then thundering, desperate charges, and graceful, hair-breadth escapes. At last in one great charge, Sombre's horn tore the mantle from Lariato's arm and carrying it half around the ring, as a flaming banner, the bull ground and trampled it in the dust. A slight hissing was heard in the audience which turned to thundering applause when Lariato contemptuoutly refused a new mantle! The audience became breathless, the man alone was now the mad beast's target!

Sombre, dripping with blood and perspiration, his flanks swelling and falling, in his great gasps for breath, his eyes half blinded by the

dust and glare of the arena, gave the matador one brief glance, then with head low down, he charged upon him. Lariato's long keen blade was lowered confidently to its death-dealing slant.

Just as the murderous sword-point seemed about to sink through the bull's shoulders, into his very heart, a despairing woman's cry reached the matador's ears. Then a mighty hiss, interspersed with hoots and jeers, went up from the exasperated spectators, for the bull thundered on, with the sword scarcely penetrating the tough muscles, standing upright between his shoulders, while Lariato stood disarmed.

Coming to a standstill far beyond his antagonist, Sombre shook his huge neck and the sword spun high into the air and fell toward the center of the ring. Lariato took several steps toward it, but tottered and fell upon the ground in a swoon, for he had been severely bruised.

With an exultant roar, the bull rushed back to complete his victory, the hissing and the hooting were hushed, and groans of horror filled the air. Suddenly, just as the animal had gained full headway in his murderous charge, a slight, white figure glided into the ring, and a clear voice cried "Sombre!"

At the sound of that voice, the charging beast came strainingly to a halt, threw up his head, and gazed eagerly about, then turned and rushed toward the girl! Capeadors hurried forward flaunting their red capes, but she waved them back.

"Go back! You shall torment him no more, my poor, tortured, wounded Sombre!"

In a moment the great beast was beside her, licking her dress and arms and hands, as she deftly extricated the barbs from his neck and shoulders, the thousands of throats around them shrieked out a vast pandemonium of bravos. Blood was covering her hands and staining her dress, but Anita was blind to it. Meanwhile Lariato had struggled to his feet and hurried towards her, "God bless you," he was saying, but she pushed past him with a glad smile, saying, "Wait, I have something to say to them!"

Standing in middle of the ring, Anita waited for silence. Delaying until not a sound was heard, she said in a clear voice that reached every ear:

"Jeer not at Lariato, he spared my pet, my Sombre, because he loved me!"

No matador ever gained such applause as followed. Bouquets, sombreros, scarfs, and full purses showered into the ring, and as that strange group stood facing the ovation, "Bravo Lariato, Bravo la Senorita de Toros, Bravo Sombre!" rang out and re-echoed over the distant housetops.

THE CITY CHOIR.

CY WARMAN.

I WENT to hear the city choir;
The summer night was still;
I heard the music mount the spire—
They sang: "He'll take the pil—"

"I'm on! I'm on!" the tenor cried;
And looked into my face;
"My journey home, my journey home."
Was bellowed by the bass.

"It is for the—It is for the—"
Shrieked the soprano shrill.
I knew not why they looked at me,
And yelled, "'He'll take the pil—"

Then clutching wildly at my breast,
Oh, heaven! My heart stood still:
"Yes, yes," I cried, "If that is best,
Ye powers! I'll take the pil—"

As I, half fainting reached the door,
And saw the starry dome,
I heard them sing: "When life is o'er
He'll take the pilgrim home."

TO THE LIONS.

ELBRIDGE S. BROOKS.

Cutting from "A Son of Issachar."

THE great amphitheatre was thronged with spectators. The gay-colored velaria flapped lazily in the gentle breezes that were borne downward from the heights of Hermon.

Royalty, in the person of Philip, the Tetrarch; power, in the presence of Roman officials and Greek tide-waiters; enthusiasm, in the straining eyes and throats hoarse from shouting of the heterogeneous mass that thronged the Gentile cities of Palestine, looked down upon the arena from decorated boxes and uncomfortable tiers of polished stone. Already the games had been in progress. There had been wrestling and tumbling; there had been foot-races and chariot-races; there had been exhibitions of trained beasts—cheers for the victors and favorites, jeers for the defeated and overthrown. And now must come that tinge of blood without which no exhibition in circus or amphitheatre was deemed complete. To the waiting throng the announcement of the editor was most welcome:

"*One Juda Bar-Simon, a Gaulonite. For plotting treason against our lord, the Emperor, to the lions! If he shall conquer—to the galleys for life!*"

The people hoped this criminal, Bar-Simon, would prove alert and strong, otherwise his tussle with the lion would be but stupid sport. A crouch, a spring, a crunching of human bones, and all would be over. They wished, rather, far a show of skill. Whether in the end man or lion should receive the applause was to them a matter of small concern.

The narrow door of one of the vaulted cells beneath the overhanging tiers swung open. The man was first to be displayed. A murmur of applause passed through the curious throng.

"By Bacchus," said one to his neighbor, "a promising looking young fellow, this Bar-Simon. Here may yet be sport."

Naked, save for the closely-fitting cloth that covered his loins, with a netting of light but strong stuff thrown across his left arm, and with a sharpened sword in his right hand, Bar-Simon stepped into the amphitheatre. His eyes made the round of the crowded circus. Not a friend in all that throng. Only a mass of curious faces, waiting to see him die. With folded arms and with a look of defiance and determination on his handsome face, he walked swiftly to the center of the sand-strewn arena and awaited his foe.

The iron bars that screened the front of another of those underground cells were lifted from above. A moment's delay, and then a tawny muzzle, topped with a thick black mane, was thrust through the opening. Another moment, and a great lion sprung, with a roar of relief at this sudden freedom, out toward the center of the ring. Bar-Simon was to have no lack of work.

The great lion lay for awhile crouched listlessly upon the sand. His eyes roamed about the circus, curious, wondering. He seemed in no haste to do more than crouch and investigate his surroundings.

"Ho! in the ring there; stir him up!" came the cry from the benches. But Bar-Simon, his eyes on the lion, still stood with folded arms immovable as a statue.

The shouts roused the tawny brute. He spied Bar-Simon, still standing upright and motionless. Is it man or statue? the lion wondered. With a dull, purring growl he crawled toward that upright figure and crouched for the death-dealing spring. There is a movement in the statue. The folded arms draw quickly apart. The shawl, stripped from the arm, is held loosely in the hand. The lion's tawny head draws slowly back. The tension of the legs is increased. Then —there is a flash of yellow in the air, and the great brute launches itself straight at Bar-Simon's head.

The man's lithe, graceful figure springs aside as the lion cleaves the air. It springs aside, but hardly out of range. One blackly-shaded paw strikes as the watcher jumps, and down on the sand sprawls the young Jew. The lion turns about.

"Quick, Jew, or he is on you! Ha! a nimble fellow! See, he is up, he is off!" and with bleeding shoulder, but calm and defiant still, he awaits the second attack.

Again the lion crouches; again it launches itself in air; again the quick young athlete springs aside. Here is no second fall. The wary eye watches every motion, the strong but supple hands grasp the scarf-like net and hold it far to the right; then, as the lion touches the ground, the scarf with a dexterous fling is thrown about the great head, and in an instant the whole forepart of the beast is enveloped in the encircling net.

Struggling, tearing, raging to free himself from this unexpected encumbrance, the lion for an instant seems to forget its human foe and endeavors only to relieve itself of the all-entangling net. It is Bar-Simon's opportunity. With a spring he is at the side of the brute. Quick of stroke and sure of aim, he burries the sharp-bladed sword deep in the lion's body. Again the thrust is sped. With a roar of mingled rage and pain the lion frees its head from the distracting net and snaps savagely at its foe; but, with its legs still entangled, it is unable to crouch and spring.

And now—"Ye gods! but he is a cool fellow!"—almost bestriding the hindquarters of the brute, Bar-Simon drives his short sword twice again into the very vitals of the beast. There is one broken roar, a last convulsive twitch, a final attempt to spring, and then, pierced with four fatal wounds, the lion rolls over and, at the very feet of the young Jew, lies dead.

Shout upon shout rang through the crowded circus, and soon above the cheers could be distinguished the cry; "Pardon, pardon for the Jew! Life for the victor! No galleys, no galleys! Pardon for the son of Simon!"

The manager of the games sprang into the ring. No need to fear the lion now. Only his victor lives. The manager threw a laurel wreath upon Bar-Simon's curling hair.

"Brave fellow!" he cried, even his circus-sated nature roused to enthusiasm. "The like I never saw. Yonder is the noble Tetrarch. Down on your knees and sue for pardon and for mercy!"

With outstretched hands Bar-Simon turned toward the royal box. And Philip, the Tetrarch, himself full of delight over this great triumph, cried:

"Well and bravely fought, O Jew! Go free!"

MEHITABEL'S WALTZ.

TO and fro between the dining-room and the tiny kitchen trudged old Mehitabel, clearing the dishes from the luncheon-table. Everyone called her *old* Mehitabel, although she vowed she was under fifty. And really when you looked closely in her face, she did not appear old. But she was so melancholy that no one could imagine her ever to have been young.

Here and there about her work went old Mehitabel, singing mournfully:

"There is a fountain fi-i-lled with blood."

"When I was a gal," she would say sometimes, "I could sing an' play with the best on 'em; but them days is past and gone. All the folks is gone from Clarence, an' I ain't no heart for playin' the pianner any more, nor singin' them gay songs."

Old Mehitabel's relatives were dead. She had no home, and in the dingy city lodging-house she had a situation, something between a housekeeper and a servant.

"Lose all their guilty sta-ya-ains,
Lose all their guil-i-il-ty stains,"

she sang. Most of the lodgers were out, and so was Mrs. Brewster, her mistress, and she might sing to her heart's content.

"A-and sinners plunged—"

she continued, when the bell rang. Mehitabel did not hurry. She never did when the bell rang.

"— — — — beneath that flood
Lo-ose all their guilty stains!"

The bell rang again loudly, and Mehitabel went grumbling to the door. A tall, uncouth man confronted her.

"Is—is they a Miss Rogers a-livin' here?"

"Why, that's me—why, why, J'siah Lane, sure's I'm alive!"

"Is it really you, Hettie? Why, I wouldn't a-known you."

"Wal, I guess I be changed, an' so be you, too. Where'd ye come from? Can't ye come in and sit down a spell?"

Mehitabel led the way to the parlor and pushed forward the softest chair.

"Wal, J'siah, I don't believe I've seen you for twenty years, sence you went away from home. Clarence has changed sence then. You wouldn't know the place."

"No, guess not, Hettie. Wal, how've you been getting along, an' how's all the old Clarence folks?"

"Wal, Clarence is purty nigh turned into a buryin'-ground. All the old folks is dead an' the young ones is gone."

And Mehitabel went on to tell the story.

"Hettie!" cried Josiah at length, "do you play the way you used to out to Clarence?"

"I ain't played much sence them days, J'siah."

"An' if it hadn't a-ben fur that Green gal that told me you was a shinin' up to Jim Banks, it wouldn't a-ben as it has ben."

"Tain't no use talkin' about them things now, J'siah."

"Do you remember, Hettie, that thing you used to play on the pianner out to Clarence?"

"'Captain Jinks,' you mean?"

"No, twa'n't that, Hettie; it was some dance tune."

"Oh, I do remember; it was a waltz, and it was awful pretty too."

"I can see you now jest as you used to play it. I s'pose you've kinder got out o' the knack in all these years."

"Oh, I ain't touched a pianner, only to dust it, in ten years, I guess. There ain't nobody nowadays wants to hear me play."

"Wal, Hettie, there's somebody here now'd like to hear you, if you can get the tune."

"Why, I s'pose I might try, J'siah."

"I wisht you would, Hettie."

Mehitabel went to the piano and looked at the keys. She could remember the old waltz, and, better still, she could remember how Josiah used to sit in ecstacy while she played it. If she could only bring back that time—the time before Josiah and she had quar-

reled and parted. She touched the keys and the sound almost startled her, so long had it been since she had tried to play.

But at last she began—slowly at first and feeling her way over the keys, then faster and faster as the music came back to her. The time was fast and furious, and it seemed as though Mehitabel must be standing on the pedal.

The discordant sounds floated up the stairway and fell on the ears of a lodger who was trying to take a nap. Jingle, jingle, bang, bang, bang went the piano, and the lodger rose with curses and slammed his door shut. But still he could hear the frantic pace of the waltz.

Josiah, sitting in the parlor as he listened, seemed to have his youth renewed. He no longer saw Mehitabel with wide streaks of gray in her hair, with wrinkles in her forehead, and with melancholy stamped on her features. As the waltz seemed to take him back to the dear old courting days in Clarence, so in his eyes she was changed back to the charming girl whom he had worshiped.

And Mehitabel forgot herself. She knew nothing save that she was playing Josiah's favorite tune, and that Josiah was sitting there with a proud and tender look on his face as he gazed at her just as he used to sit twenty years ago.

The lodger swore loudly in his room upstairs.

As Mehitabel went on Josiah drew closer and closer to the piano.

With a tearing, discordant bang on the keys, Mehitabel ended the waltz. She turned and met Josiah's wistful look.

"Hettie, let's forget it's twenty years sence you last played that tune."

"I wisht I could, J'siah."

"Hettie, I'm older'n I used to be in them days, an' I ain't quite such a fool. Hettie, I love you so's I can't stand it. I thought the feeling was dead an' buried. But it's riz up sence you played that music just as much as if Gabriel's trumpet had been a-blowin'. An' if you'll have me now, I vow I'll never be jealous again 's long's I live. What do you say, Hettie?"

Josiah was close beside Mehitabel now. But there was a hasty movement in the parlor a few moments later when Mrs. Brewster's key was heard rattling in the lock, and when she appeared Mehitabel and Josiah were sitting far apart, blushing deeply.

THE OLD U. S.

ARTHUR TRAIN.

"DOCKBRIDGE," said the District-Attorney, "I've got to send you to Seattle. We've just located Andrews there—Sam Andrews of the Boodle Bank. McGinnis here will go out to make the arrest, but I must have some one to look after the legal end of it—and handle the extradition proceedings. Remember, now! your job is to *bring Andrews back!*"

He handed his assistant a bulky document and closed the door. Dockbridge gazed blankly after him.

"Oh, certainly, certainly! Don't mention it! Delighted, I'm sure!" Then he turned ferociously to a silent figure sitting behind the railing. "Sudden, eh? Don't even ask me if it's convenient! Exiles me for two months! Just drop over to Bombay and buy him a package of cigarettes, like a good fellow!"

McGinnis climbed disjointedly to his feet. "Sure we're to have the pleasure of travellin' togither. An iligant thrip it will be! Oi'm only regretful Oi can't take me wife along wid me."

Pat's matrimonial troubles were the common property of the entire force. Conceive, then, his surprise when the Assistant District-Attorney suddenly shouted:

"I'll do it!"

"Phwat?"

"Take *my* wife!"

"Yez have none, ye spalpeen!"

"I'll have one by to-morrow!"

"An' it is Miss Peggy, ye mane?"

"It is. The county pays the bills. I'll make this my *wedding trip!*"

Peggy at first opposed strenuously Jack's proposition. The idea of going on one's honeymoon with a policeman! But in the end they were married.

It was a gay little party of three that left Montreal for Vancouver the following Saturday. There were few passengers for the west, and the triumvirate soon became friendly with all the conductors, brakemen,

and engine hands. Peggy sat for hours spell-bound at the windows. Then in the monotonous hours across the frozen prairie she learned all the mysteries of the engine-room; and once, when there was a clear track all the way to the Rockies, the driver allowed her slender fingers to guide the dangerous steed. She was undeniably pretty, and he opined loudly that by the time they reached Vancouver, Peggy could send her along as well as he could himself. At odd moments she perused diligently her husband's copy of "Moore on Extradition," for she saw no reason why a woman shouldn't know something about her husband's profession, particularly when it was as exciting a one as Jack's.

Four days more and the whole range of the Canadian Rockies lay around them.

"Glad you came, Peg?" shouted Dockbridge.

"Shure, ain't we all av us?" inquired McGinnis. "Say, this beats th' Bowery. Th' Tenderloin ain't in it wid this. Oi'd loike to camp roight here for the rest of me days!"

On they ploughed their way until they dropped into the wonderful canon of "The Fraser," and knew their journey was drawing to a close.

"Shure, 'tis a sad thing we can't ride in a train, drawin' th' county's money foriver!" sighed McGinnis as the sunset died for the last time over the foaming rapids.

"Ah, but we've work to do, Pat!" answered Peggy. "You mustn't forget Sam Andrews and the Boodle Bank. There's 'fame and fortune' waiting for us."

Pat continued on to Seattle to arrest the fugitive, while Jack and Peggy hastened to Olympia to secure the Governor's recognition of their credentials. This was easily obtained, and they took the train for Seattle where they found McGinnis, together with the prisoner and his lawyer, awaiting them. Andrews proved to be a gentleman. He apologized for bringing his lawyer. It was only to make sure that his arrest was entirely legal. Everything could be easily explained, and in the meantime, the only thing to do was to return with them as quickly as possible. He suggested that a few days in Seattle would prove interesting to them, and in the meantime he could get his affairs in shape a little.

Peggy thought that was a splendid idea. Jack saw no harm in it, and neither did McGinnis. Two days passed. The favorable impression made by the prisoner upon his captors steadily increased. They regarded him as an agreeable companion whom fate had thrown in their way.

"And now for New York!" exclaimed Jack on the evening of the third day. "How shall we go?"

"Divle a bit do Oi care," answered Pat. "Th' longer th' better, suits me. 'Tis the county pays me, an' Oi loike ridin' in the cars down to th' ground."

"What is the prettiest way, Mr. Andrews?" inquired Peggy. Andrew's gray eyes flashed. He hesitated a moment.

"There's practically no choice. They're all lovely at this time of year. If it wasn't such a tough journey you might go back by the 'Northern Montana' and connect with the 'Soo.' It's a magnificent trip in summer, but I dare say pretty cold in winter. Wonderful scenery, though."

"Let's go!" exclaimed Peggy. "That's what we are after—scenery! I don't care if it is cold."

Andrews hid a smile by lighting another cigar.

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All day long the snow had been falling steadily. Inside Jack's compartment sat the four members of our party playing cards, now on the best of terms. The good-natured conductor came in.

"We're most at the top o' the pass," he remarked. "To-morrow morning we'll be at Souris, and then nothin' but prairie all across Dakota. When you wake up the mountains 'll be two hundred miles west of you. Hard luck."

"What's that, conductor?" said Andrews. "Souris to-morrow morning? Any stops to-night?"

"Nope; clear down-hill track all the way. There's a flag station an hour beyond the divide, but there's no regular station there, and Jim wants to make up time, so I reckon we'll make the run without stoppin'. Oh, it's great here in summer. Finest thing in Canada, in my opinion."

"In Canada!" exclaimed Dockbridge. "Are we in Canada?"

"You've been in Canada since three o'clock—look on the map there in the folder. Two hours from now you'll be back in the old U. S."

Dockbridge was staring intently at the map. In Canada! The warrant of the Governors of New York and Washington were valueless in His Majesty's Dominion! The speed of the train seemed to have increased, and the cars swayed from side to side as they sped down the grade. At that moment came a prolonged wail from the engine, followed by the quick clutch of the brakes. The conductor rushed toward the door.

"The flag station," he shouted. "Must ha' signalled us!"

Dockbridge's heart dropped a beat and he glanced apprehensively toward Andrews. The latter was smiling, but the hand that held his cigar trembled a very little.

"You're young yet, Dockbridge," he remarked. "There are one or two things still for you to learn. You might as well take off that hand-cuff, McGinnis."

Pat snapped a shining Colt from his pocket and cocked it. "Plaze don't git excited, me frind. P'r'aps ye don't know it all, yerself. Wan move an' Oi'll put six holes in yer carcus!"

A blast of icy air poured into the car from the open door as an immense man entered.

"Is Mr. Andrews here?"

"I am Mr. Andrews. This is the officer who holds me in custody."

The judge turned to one of his followers.

"Serve him!" he growled.

The one addressed took from beneath his coat a bundle of papers and, selecting one, handed it to McGinnis, who let it fall to the floor without a word.

"Put up that pistol!" continued the judge.

At this moment Dockbridge exclaimed, "Here, what's all this?" The officer handed another paper to him. It was a writ ordering him to produce the body of Samuel Andrews before the Honorable Andrew Peters, Judge of the Supreme Court of Alberta, forthwith, and show cause why said Andrews should not be set at liberty. He was trapped.

"Is this Judge Peters?" he inquired politely of the huge man.

"I am. And I now pronounce this car a court and direct you to release your prisoner."

"Well, Judge, I'm naturally taken somewhat by surprise. However as the court is now in session, I can only ask the privilege of arguing the matter before your honor. If I might be permitted to do so, I would suggest that the hearing take place in some larger space than this compartment in which my wife desires speedily to retire."

"That's right, jedge," spoke up the conductor. "Don't keep the lady out of her room. You can hold court in the baggage-car."

The crowd streamed down the aisle and into the baggage-car in front.

"Shall I come along, Jack?" whispered his wife.

"No, stay here. I'm afraid we're beaten."

"When a man marries his troubles begin." Peggy simply couldn't stay there. She threw on her fur coat and cap and followed into the baggage-car. The crowd was getting larger every moment. Passengers kept coming in, and last of all the engineer and fireman entered by the forward door. Outside the huge engine hissed and throbbed. The sight of the engineer suggested instantly a plan to Peggy's mind. She slipped behind a pile of trunks, snapped the big padlock through the staples of the door; then, hurrying back to the compartment, rummaged until she found Jack's box of cigars. Arming herself with these and with Jack's copy of "Moore on Extradition," she made her way back to the crowded baggage-car.

"Yes, yes, I know all that!" the judge was saying. "But it ain't what he *did* that counts here."

"Excuse me, please," exclaimed Peggy. "I thought you might like to smoke."

"Well, I don't care if I do. Thank y'." Peggy told him "to send the box along." Then she whispered in her husband's ear.

"Read him that chapter on 'International Relations.' Keep it going for ten minutes, and we'll win yet."

Only a solitary brakeman remained outside in the snow, stamping and swinging his arms.

"Hello, Mr. Sanders," called Peggy, "you ought to come in and hear the argument. They're giving away cigars. I should think you would freeze."

"Well, I'm froze already," answered Sanders. "I reckon I'll come in and hear the fun. Is that straight about the cigars?"

"Of course, it is," laughed Peggy.

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The judge threw back his burly form against the side of the car and exhaled a thick cloud of smoke.

"Bosh!" he exclaimed. "You're talkin' nonsense. Prisoner discharged. Undo them handcuffs. This court stands adjourned, and it is goin' to take the prisoner with it into—"

A jerk of the train prevented the conclusion of his sentence.

"My God! The engine!" exclaimed the fireman, making a spring for the door.

"Locked! Locked!" he yelled. The conductor dived for the platform. The judge started to his feet.

"This is an infernal trick," he shouted. "Stop this train! D'ye hear? Stop this train at once!"

But the train was gathering headway every moment, and was fast dropping down the grade.

"Open the door!" gasped the engineer. "Get a crowbar somebody. We'll be going a hundred miles an hour inside of a minute!"

But no crowbar was to be found, and the door resisted all their efforts. On rushed the train, thundering down the pass, swaying around curves until the frightened occupants of the baggage-car clung to one another for support, and every moment adding to its speed. The baggage-man threw open the side door. The night dashed by in a solid wall of white.

"This is a crime!" roared the judge. "I'm being kidnapped. Your government will be notified—if we're not all killed. Can't somebody stop this train?"

"Toot-toot-toot! Toot-toot-toot! Toot-toot-toot! Toot-toot!" —the old Harvard cheer that Jack had heard echoing across the football field a hundred times.

He began to laugh hysterically. On and on—faster and faster, rushed the train. Breathless each man struggled to keep his footing, momentarily expecting to be dashed into eternity. The minutes

dragged as hours, until at last from somewhere in the rear of the train the fireman returned with a wrench, and throwing his whole weight upon the padlock, quickly snapped its staples, and the engineer, clambering desperately upon the tender, disappeared.

Perhaps it was the dimness of the light, but Andrews had suddenly begun to look white and old.

At the same moment a red signal flashed by upon the track and the train roared across a suspension bridge without slackening speed.

"Red River!" gasped the fireman.

The blood leaped in Jack's veins. Red River! Then they were across the line. Peggy had won! God bless her! With a triumphant glance at the cowering Andrews, he turned upon the frightened crowd.

"You can't beat the Yankee girl!" he shouted. "Judge, you're right. We've adjourned court, and are taking the prisoner with us—*into the United States!*"

FALLEN.

W. J. LAMPTON.

FELL she from her high estate;
Fell as if the hand of Fate
Had in malice struck her down;
Thrown aside her dainty crown;
Left her in the street alone,
Heart to heart with paving-stone.
She so young and sweet and fair,
Creature of a purer air;
Light of home; the radiant gleam
Of a father's dearest dream.
Sunshine was but shadow while
Friends could linger in her smile.
Fell she from her proud estate,
Fell as by the hand of Fate;
Heart to heart with paving-stone,
Cast into the street alone,
By a confounded old safety bicycle.

'MANDA.

JEANETTE PEMBERTON.

MISS MARY lived alone, not by reason of selfish longing for an old maid's paradise, nor because of disagreeable characteristics, but merely as we do most things in this world, from force of circumstances. As she loved to read and paint, and was not timid, she might have found no other inconvenience from the solitary life than the mere loss of companionship, but for the "servant question." Woman after woman, girl after girl, promised, came, pronounced the house "too terrible desolate," and departed.

Miss Mary was much cast down, but not despairing. She advertised her want, and received applicants with noble fortitude and sound judgment. And one morning she welcomed to her kitchen a tall, angular, hard-featured woman of forty or more winters, dressed in rusty mourning garments.

"My name is 'Manda. No'm, not *A*manda, if you please. I was brought up to despise affectation, and I don't propose to put on any frills at my time of life."

"Very well, 'Manda. I'd like you to get the kitchen and pantries in order this morning, and have dinner ready at one o'clock. This afternoon I'll show you what else I want."

The dinner was punctual and satisfactory, and Miss Mary's heart was puffed up with hope. But as she sat reading, she glanced out of the long window which opened on the piazza, and her light heart sank low. She descried a gaunt figure, wearing scant skirts and shawl, and topped by bonnet and rusty crape veil, sitting stiffly on the edge of one of the long chairs.

Miss Mary was no coward. She opened the window, and advanced boldly to the attack.

"'Manda, what does this mean?"

"Oh, nothing to scare you. I belong to the Society for the Cultivation of Repose; and it's one of our rules to sit in some pleasant nook and rest for an hour after dinner every day. Some of our members

have lost good homes by sticking to the rule; and if you want me to go I'm all ready?"

This was plainly interrogative, but Miss Mary's only reply was a brilliant smile. It seemed to answer the purpose, however.

"I come out here, because 'twas so pleasant and soft; but I reckoned I'd better wrap up or I'd git neuralgia in my head bones and you'd have me sick on your hands. You needn't worry about the work. That's my business."

Miss Mary was not without a sense of humor, and she returned to her own "repose" to enjoy the situation. Why should she interfere with the rules of the Society for the Cultivation of Repose unless they interfered with her affairs? A few days' observation proved that they did not. The work was done, and well done, and life seemed all luxurious ease.

"If 'Manda were young," her mistress used to soliloquize, "I should know that she could not last. Some man would snap her up, so to speak. But with her age, her face, and her figure, I'm sure—yes, sure—I have nothing to fear."

She said this to herself many times; but, alas, for the assurance of mere words.

"Miss Mary, have you got a piece of black cloth you can loan me to wrap 'round these old shoes? I'm just starting to the cobbler's to have them heelt."

"Why, 'Manda, why don't you take paper? Here's some."

"Oh, Miss Mary, you forget I'm in mourning," smiling indulgently. "I always have my parcels done in black. I couldn't carry a bundle of yellow paper! It wouldn't look decent."

"Oh!" Miss Mary's tone expressed surprise of newly enlightened ignorance. "'Manda, you never have told me what friend you are wearing black for?"

"I am a widow," was the dignified reply. "That is—he broke it off before we actually stood at the altar—but we were as good as married. He led another woman to the altar, an inferior one. She never even had the sense to wear black for him! But I always knew his heart was mine. The undertaker down here next door to the cobbler's has been looking at me a good deal, on prayer-meeting nights. I've some-

times wondered what he's thinking about. But there! It doesn't become a widow to be premature!"

She grasped her mourning bundles in her black gloved hands, and hastened on her way to agitate the undertaker's heart before she revealed too freely the inner workings of her own.

"Miss Mary, would you be willing to let me off for the whole afternoon, to-day?" asked 'Manda, one soft September noon. "I belong to the Society for the Promotion of Artistic Taste Among the Masses, and I want to go with a friend to visit a little scenery out in the other end of town," and Miss Mary gave the desired permission.

'Manda finished her work early, for once breaking her iron rule of an hour's repose after dinner, and busied herself "renovating" her crape veil.

Miss Mary was seated upon the piazza, reading. A sound of wheels on the road attracted her attention, and she glanced up to see a hearse slowly approaching in the distance. Not an unusual sight—but she wondered who was to receive its last sad office. She had returned to her book, however, when suddenly, without warning, a chill shadow seemed to cross her heart. She lifted heavy lids to see the hearse standing at her own gate—as she had seen it three dreadful times before.

Her first impulse was to fly into the house for protection. But second thought advised her to wait and meet the undertaker, who was walking up the path with befitting solemnity.

"Is Mrs. 'Manda Knight ready?" he asked respectfully.

It seemed a summons to the grave—but when 'Manda appeared, decorously arrayed in her best, but rusty crape, Miss Mary learned that it meant only a pleasure trip for two lovers, who seemed coyly happy in the face of most adverse surroundings.

They drove away, side by side upon the gruesome seat, chatting with solemn joy.

"You see, Miss Mary," 'Manda explained upon her return, "he had to go to the cemet'ry on business, and as it's a good three miles we didn't want to walk, so he took the only carriage he had. It kep' us mindful, too, that life ain't all courtin' and sparkin'. There's a

time for all things. I do hope it didn't give you a turn, ma'am, for I s'pose I'll be driving out with him once in a while now?"

Soon a subtle change crept over the small household. Not that the work was less well done—but the presiding genius of the kitchen lost the rigidity that had been her chief characteristic. The hour devoted to Repose often found her reading poetry in a comfortable rocking-chair, instead of perching in stiff idleness upon some hard seat. She occasionally sang wild, stray notes at her work, and once Miss Mary overheard her whistling "Annie Laurie." The crisis was reached one "prayer-meeting night," when she asked:

"Won't you, please, just fix this veil at the back for me? I can't reach the pesky thing."

Miss Mary could not believe her own eyes! Could this maiden in blue calico gown, white "shoulder cape," and sailor-hat with dotted lace veil be 'Manda? Wa the world—her world—coming to an end? Without self-consciousness, 'Manda spoke:

"I see you're surprised at my clothes. That's natural. But I come in mostly to tell you I'm engaged to the undertaker. Oh, you needn't be scairt! I ain't going to leave you! I ain't in any hurry to marry. There's time enough. And, besides, I don't think his old house is as healthy as it might be. I belong to the Society for the Sanitation of Homes, and I ain't going to put myself in any risk of typhoid or diptheory. You needn't be uneasy with regards to my deserting you, yet, ma'am."

Miss Mary's fears were not so easily allayed. She could never supply 'Manda's place. It would be impossible to find two such perfect servants in one short life—and how, after these months of bliss, could one return to ministrations such as she had endured in the past? Her days were anxious and troubled; but even in her sorrow she rejoiced in the brightness of 'Manda's appearance. She had not realized until now how distinctly depressing the mourning garments had been; brilliant blue and pink gowns replaced the rusty black serge, and went far toward heartening her up—but so much the greater would be her loss!

These anxieties were freely discussed with 'Manda, who readily foresaw the difficult task of finding a satisfactory successor to herself.

"Not but what some others have got abilities as good as what I've got; but they don't have my sense of duty," she said, modestly. "They ain't many that stands by their own consciences, now-days. But don't you worry. I belong to the Society for the Protection of Single Women and Widows, and it's one of the rules not to give any man the comforts that ought to be dedicated to some woman, so I ain't going to leave you in the lurch."

"I've often wondered, 'Manda, how you happened to belong to so many societies," said Miss Mary, half questioning.

"Well—" 'Manda smiled. "Down where I come from we ain't so pushed for time as folks in a big city, and winter nights we get together and improve ourselves, forming societies. But I don't mind telling *you* that sometimes they ain't but one member to mine!"

It was two weeks after the startling announcement of 'Manda's engagement to the undertaker. Miss Mary one Sunday morning was startled to see a familiar, tall figure slowly walk down the path of the gate, clothed in sombre serge and dingy crape. Could it be 'Manda?

Miss Mary could hardly wait until her return from church to make inquiries, and invented an immediate errand to the kitchen.

"I trust you haven't heard any bad news, 'Manda?"

"Well, that's as folks take it," was the philosophic reply.

"I was afraid some one might have died?"

"My dress, I s'pose. Oh, no, I've broke my engagement, that's all. And that throws me back into the same state of feeling for Joe Knight that I've had ever since he died, so I just expressed my mind by my clo'es."

A swift exultation filled Miss Mary's being, but she spoke calmly.

"May I ask what was the trouble."

"Why, yes, I'd just as lieves tell you. You see he was in a terrible hurry to have me come and make his house comfortable. He'd heard I could cook," she interjected scornfully, "and I told him I wouldn't take one step till I see you settled with some capable woman. He was bound he wouldn't wait, and I told him I couldn't abide such selfishness, and it was a poor outlook for my happiness to see him so anxious to discommode a lady. And the upshot of it was—we parted."

"But, 'Manda, I can't let you give up your life's happiness for me. I wouldn't dare accept so great a sacrifice, much as I appreciate your generosity."

"Oh, don't you worry," she returned. "I don't deny but what I'm disappointed. When a man's got a good steady business like his, and a house capable of being fixed up, any woman of sense better say yes than no. But there's others to think of. Folks say I'm queer —but I ain't too queer to know a kind and honorable lady when I see her. And they ain't too plenty, either. To tell the truth, that old hearse kind o' palled on me! I b'lieve I'll get up a Society for the Promotion of Proper Manners in Courting."

DELSARTE GIRL.

ALICE E. IVES.

OH, the Delsarte girl,
Who goes with a whirl,
And objects to your way of walking;
Who knows how to sit,
And whose clothes don't fit,
And who owns a receipt for talking.
You must move in curves;
If your spine just swerves
One inch from the proper angle,
You ought to take a "course,"
Lest you go, perforce,
With your joints and cords in a tangle.
Your torso must be plumb,
You mustn't use your thumb
To express one kind of dejection;
You mustn't even wink
Before you stop to think,
Nor go upstairs without due reflection.

COURTING OF DINAH SHADD.

RUDYARD KIPLING.

Arranged by Miss Jennie Mannheimer.

"DID I ever tell you how Dinah Shadd came to be wife av mine? I will assume that I have not. In the days av my youth I was a man that filled the eye an' delighted the sowl av woman. Niver man was hated as I have been. Niver man was loved as I—no, not within half a day's march av ut. I could play wid four women a wanst, an' kape thim from findin' out anythin' about the other three, an' smile like a full-blown marigold through ut all. An' so I lived an' so I was happy, till afther that business wid Annie Bragin—she that turned me off as cool as a meat-safe, an' taught me where I stud in the mind av an honest woman.

"Afther that I sickened awhile an' tuk thought to me reg'mental work, conceitin' mesilf I wud study an' be a sargint, an' a major-gineral twinty minutes afther that. But on top av me ambitiousness there was an empty place in me sowl, an' me own opinion av mesilf cud not fill ut.

"Sez I to mesilf: 'Terence, ye're a great man 'an the best set up in the reg'ment. Go on an' get promotion.'

"Sez mesilf to me, 'What for?'

"Sez I to mesilf, 'For the glory of ut.'

"Sez mesilf to me, 'Will that fill these two strong arrums av yours, Terence?'

"So a bad time ut was. Wanst, bein' a fool, I went into the married lines, for the sake av speakin' to our ould color-sargint Shadd. I was a corp'ril then—rejuced aftherward; but a corp'ril then. I've got a photograft av mesilf to prove ut.

"'You'll take a cup av tay wid us!' sez he.

"'I will that,' I sez, 'tho' tay is not my divarsion.'

"An' thin—an' thin whin the kettle was to be filled, Dinah came

in—my Dinah—her sleeves rowled up to the elbow, an' her hair in a gowlden glory over her forehead, the big blue eyes beneath twinklin' like stars on a frosty night, an' the tread av her two feet lighter than waste paper from the colonel's basket in ord'ly-room when ut's emptied. Bein' but a shlip av a girl, she went pink at seein' me, an' I twisted me mustache an' looked ut a picture forninst the wall. Never show a woman that ye care the snap av a finger for her, an' begad she'll come bleatin' to your boot heels.

"When Dinah was out av the door (an' 'twas as tho' the sunlight had gone, too), 'Mother av hiven, sargint!' sez I, 'but is that your daughter?'

"'I've believed that way these eighteen years,' sez old Shadd.

"'Then why, in the name av fortune, did I never see her before?' sez I.

"'She was a bit av a child till last year, an' she shot up wid the spring,' sez ould Mother Shadd.

"I pulled on my gloves, dhrank off the tay, an' wint out av the house as stiff as at gineral p'rade, for well I knew that Dinah Shadd's eyes were in the small av me back out av the scullery window. Faith, that was the only time I mourned I was not a cav'lryman, for the sake av the spurs to jingle.

"I wint out to think, an' I did a powerful lot av thinkin', but ut all came round to that shlip av a girl in the dotted blue dhress, wid the blue eyes an' the sparkil in them. Thin I kept off canteen, an' I kept to the married quarthers or near by on the chanst av meetin' Dinah. Did I meet her? Oh, my time past, did I not, wid a lump in my throat as big as my valise, an' my heart goin' like a farrier's forge on a Saturday mornin'! 'Twas 'Good day to ye, Miss Dinah,' an' 'Good day t'you, corp'ril,' for a week or two, bekase av the respict I had to that girl that I cud ha' broken betune finger an' thumb.

"'Twas after three weeks standin' off an' on, an' niver makin' headway excipt through the eyes, that a little drummer-boy grinned in me face whin I had admonished him wid the buckle av my belt for riotin' all over the place.

"'An' I'm not the only wan that doesn't kape to barricks,' sez he.

"I tuk him by the scruff av his neck—my heart was hung on a hair-trigger those days, you will understand.

" 'Out wud ut,' sez I, 'or I'll lave no bone av you unbruk.'

" 'Speak to Dempsey,' sez he, howlin'. 'He's seen her home from her aunt's house in the civil lines four times this fortnight.'

"At that I wint four ways to wanst huntin' Dempsey. Presently I found him in our lines, but he niver flinched a hair.

" 'A word wid ye, Dempsey,' sez I. 'Ye've walked with Dinah Shadd four times this fortnight gone.'

" 'What's that to you?' sez he. 'I'll walk forty times more, an' forty on top av that.'

"Before I cud gyard he had his gloved fist home on me cheek, and down I went full sprawl.

" 'Will that content you?' sez he.

" 'Content?' sez I. ''Tis the beginnin' av the overture. Sthand up!'

"I was fighting for Dinah Shadd an' that cut on me cheek. What hope had he forninst me? We fought for a long time, till 'Me collar-bone's bruck,' sez he. 'Help me back to lines. I'll walk wid her no more.'

"So I helped him back.

"Next day the news was in both barracks; an' whin I met Dinah Shadd wid a cheek like all the reg'mintal tailors' samples, there was no 'Good mornin' corp'ril,' or aught else. 'An' what have I done, Miss Shadd,' sez I, very bold, 'that ye should not pass the time av day?'

" 'Ye've half killed rough-rider Dempsey,' sez she, her dear blue eyes fillin' up.

" 'May be,' sez I. 'Was he a friend av yours that saw ye home four times in a fortnight?'

" 'Yes,' sez she, very bold; but her mouth was down at the corners. 'An'—an' what's that to you.'

" 'Ask Dempsey,' sez I, purtending to go away.

" 'Did you fight for me then, you silly man?' she sez, tho' she knew ut all along.

" 'Who else?' sez I; an' I tuk wan pace to the front.

" 'I wasn't worth ut,' sez she, fingerin' her apron.

" 'That's for me to say,' sez I. 'Shall I say ut?'

" 'Yes,' sez she; an' at that I explained mesilf; an' she tould me what ivry man an' woman hears wanst in his life.

" 'But what made ye cry at startin', Dinah, darlin'?' sez I.

" 'Your—your bloody cheek,' sez she, whimpering like a sorrowful angel.

"Now, a man cud take that two ways. I tuk ut as pleased me best, an' my first kiss wid it. I kissed her on the tip av the nose an' undher the eye, and a girl that lets a kiss come tumbleways like that has never been kissed before. Take note av that. Thin we wint, hand in hand, to ould other Shadd, like two little children. That day I trod on rollin' clouds. All earth was too small to hould me. Begad, I cud ha' picked the sun out av the sky for a live coal to me pipe, so magnificent I was. Eyah! that day! that day!"

SINGING-LESSON.

MARY COLBORNE.

THE birds once heard my singing,
And laughed upon the tree;
"'Twill be long ere our forest music
Is silenced for such as he!
Away," cried the birds of the forest,
"With your counterfeit joy and woe!
You must learn from some mightier master
Ere you rival the songs we know."

But again I sang in the forest;
The birds were mute above,
While the thrill of an anguished spirit
A wonderful cadence wove.
"We knew it," whispered the wild birds,
"We knew!" sighed the gentle dove,
"He has been with the great musician—
He has mastered the lore of Love."

"N'YAWK'S THE PLACE."

WHEN first the young lady from the College Settlement saw Ardelia, she was sitting on a dirty pavement, throwing assorted refuse at an unconscious policeman.

"Come here, little girl," said the young lady. "Wouldn't you like to have a nice, cool bath?"

"Naw."

"Well, wouldn't you like some bread and butter and jam?"

"Naw!"

"I thought you might like to go on a picnic."

"Picnic? I'm all ready. Hump along!"

"We'll go and ask your mother first, won't we?"

"Jagged. She'd lift y'r face off yer! Is it the dago picnic?"

The young lady shuddered; and, seizing the hand which she imagined to have had least to do with the refuse, led Ardelia away—the first stage of her journey to Arcady.

Ardelia was a silent child; and, though she did not understand why so many local and general baths should be administered, when Fate sent her two fried eggs, she held her peace.

Later, arrayed in starched and creaking garments which had been made for a slightly smaller child, she was transported to the station, and introduced to a railroad car. The young lady babbled of daisies and cows and green grass. As Ardelia had never seen any of these things, it is hardly surprising that she was somewhat unenthusiastic.

Once last summer, when she ate the liquid dregs of the ice-cream man's great tin, and fell asleep in the room where her mother was frying onions, she had experienced a feeling similar to this one in the train, and the climax of that dreadful day lingered yet in her memory.

At last they stopped, and Ardelia was in Arcady.

A bare-legged boy in blue overalls drove them many miles along a hot, dusty road, and drew up before a gray, wooden house. A spare woman advanced to meet them.

"Terrible hot to-day, ain't it? This is the little girl, I s'pose. I guess it's pretty cool to what *she's* accustomed to, ain't it, Delia?"

"Now, Ardelia," said Miss Forsythe, "here you are in the country. Run right out in the grass and pick all the daisies you want. Don't be afraid; no one will drive you off this grass!"

Ardelia had never been driven off any grass whatever, but she obediently strode downward.

"Now, pick the daisies! I want to see you."

"Huh?"

"Oh, you poor child! Mrs. Slater, she doesn't know how! See! this way."

Ardelia bent over, tugged at a thick-stemmed clover, brought it up by the roots, recovered her balance with difficulty, and assaulted a neighboring daisy. On this she cut her hands; and, sucking off the blood angrily, laid the spoils awkwardly on the young lady's lap.

"Don't you want them yourself, dear?"

"Naw!"

"I know what you want, you're thirsty! Mrs. Slater, won't you get us some of your good, creamy milk?"

When Mrs. Slater appeared with the foaming yellow glasses, Ardelia began a deep draught. She did not like it, and instinct warned her against it, but all the thirst of a long morning urged her on, and its icy coldness enabled her to finish the glass. The young lady clapped her hands.

"There! I declare, you look like another child already! You can have all you want every day—why, what's the matter?"

For Ardelia was growing ghastly pale before them; her eyes turned inward, her lips tightened. A binding horror surged from her toes upward, and the memory of the liquid ice-cream and the frying onions faded before the awful reality of her present agony.

Later, as she lay limp and white on the slippery hair-cloth sofa in Mrs. Slater's musty parlor, she heard them discussing her situation.

"There was a lot of Fresh Air children over at Miss Simms's," her hostess explained, "and they 'most all of them said the milk was too strong—did you ever!"

That evening as Mr. Slater, his two sons and wife sat on the porch with Ardelia she wondered why the gas was not lit in all that shadowy

darkness, why the people didn't come along. She felt scared and lonely.

At home she spent the evenings playing up and down the street with a band of little girls, or sitting drowsy at the head of a flight of stone steps that led into a down-stairs saloon. In the room above her head an Italian band practised, and then Ardelia was perfectly happy, for she loved music. Often a hurdy-gurdy would station itself at the corner, and the little girls would dance shouting the tunes they knew. Ardelia was the lightest-footed of them all. Sometimes the saloon-keeper, "Old Dutchy," would beckon Ardelia to him mysteriously.

"You trow your legs goot. We shall see you already dancing, no? Here is an olluf; eat her."

And Ardelia, who loved olives to distraction, would nibble off small, sour, salty mouthfuls and suck the pit luxuriously while she listened to the Italian band.

But to-night on the Slater porch in the darkness an unspeakable boredom struck to the roots of her soul.

"Zig-a-zig! Zig-a-zig!" then a rest.

"Zig-a-zig! Zig-a-zig-a-zig!"

"Wha's 'at?"

"That? Oh, those are katydids. Kind o' cozy, ain't they?"

"Naw," said Ardelia.

"Buroom! Brrroom! broom!"

"Wha's 'at?"

"That's the frogs."

William the son took his pipe out of his mouth.

"Come here, sissy, 'n I'll tell y' a story."

Ardelia obeyed.

"Onc't they was an ol' feller comin' 'long cross-lots, late at night, an' he come to a pond, an' he kinder stopped up an' says to himself, 'Wonder how deep th' ol' pond is, anyhow?' He was just a leetle—well, he'd had a drop too much, y' see—"

"Oh! jagged!"

"I guess so. An' he heard a voice singin' out, 'Knee deep! Knee deep! Knee deep!'"

"'Oh, well,' s' he, ''f it's just knee deep I'll wade through,' an' he starts in. Just then he hears a big feller singin' out, 'Better go rrrround! Better go rround! better-goround!'"

"'Lord!' says he, 'is it s' deep's that? Well, I'll go round, then.' 'N' off he starts to walk around.

"'Knee deep! Knee deep! Knee deep!' says the peepers.

"An' there it was. Soon's he'd start to do one thing, they'd tell him another. Make up his mind he couldn't, so he stands there still, they do say, askin' 'em every night which he better do."

"Stands where?"

"Oh, I d'know. Out in that swamp, mebbe."

Ardelia's eyes grew wide with terror, and the younger boy Henry chuckled.

Time passed by. To Ardelia it might have been minutes, hours, or generations. Finally, Mrs. Slater led her upstairs into a little hot room, and told her to get into bed quick, for the lamp drew the mosquitoes.

Ardelia approached the bed distrustfully. It sank down with her weight and smelled hot and queer. She slapped viciously at a mosquito on her hot cheek, heard a great June bug flop into the room, and burst into tears of pain and fright.

In the morning Miss Forsythe came over. "Why, she isn't barefoot, Mrs. Slater," she cried. "Come here, Ardelia, and take off your shoes and stockings directly. Now, you'll know what comfort is. Oh, you've been barefoot in the city, but this will be different."

And so it was. To patter about bare-legged on the clear, safe pavement, was one thing; to venture unprotected into that waving, tripping tangle of grass was another. Ardelia with jaw set and narrowed lids felt her way into it.

"Oh, gee! Oh, gee!" she screamed.

"What is it, Ardelia, what is it? A snake?"

Mrs. Slater rushed out, seized the child half rigid with fear, and carried her to the porch.

"Toad," explained Mrs. Slater briefly.

But Ardelia, chattering with nervousness, wept for her shoes, and sat high and dry in a rocking-chair for the rest of the morning.

"She's a queer child, Miss Forsythe," Mrs. Slater said. "'S morning she asked me when did the parades go by. I told her there wa'n't any but the circus, an' that had been already. She don't seem to take any interest in th' farm either. I showed her the hens an' the eggs, an' she said it was a lie about the hens layin' 'em. 'What d'you take me for?' s'she. Then Henry milked the cow, to show her—she wouldn't believe that either—and with the milk streamin' down before her, what do you s'pose she said? 'You put it in!' s'she."

"Oh, she'll get over it," said Miss Forsythe easily. "Good-by, Ardelia, eat a good supper."

But this Ardelia did not do. She gazed fascinated at Mr. Slater who loaded his fork with cold green peas, shot them into his mouth in silence. She regarded William, gulping furiously. He never spoke. Henry she dared not look at. But she knew he was biting great round bites out of countless slices of buttered bread in utter silence. Mrs. Slater filled their plates in silence. Now Ardelia had never in her life eaten in silence. A cow-bell jangled sadly out of the gathering dusk.

Ardelia's nerves strained and snapped.

"Fer Gawd's sake, talk!" she cried sharply. "Are youse dumbies?"

* * * * * * * *

The morning dawned fresh and fair.

Miss Forsythe was going to the city for the day.

"Good-by, dear," she said to Ardelia. "I'll bring the other little children back with me. You'll enjoy that. Good-by."

"I'm comin', too."

"Why—no, dear. You'd only turn around and come right back, you know," urged Miss Forsythe, secretly touched by this devotion to herself.

"Come back nothin', I'm going home."

"Why—why, Ardelia! You don't want to go back to that horrible smelly street? Not truly?"

"Betcher life I do!" said Ardelia.

They rode to the city in silence. But the jar and jolt of the engine made music in Ardelia's ears.

They pushed through the great station, climbed the steps of the elevated track, they jingled on a cross-town car. At a familiar corner Ardelia slipped loose her hand, uttered a grunt of joy, and Miss Forsythe looked for her in vain. She was gone.

But late in the evening, barefooted and abandoned, nibbling at a section of bologna sausage, secure in the hope of an olive to come, Ardelia cake-walked insolently with a band of little girls behind a severe policeman, mocking his stolid gait, to the delight of Old Dutchy.

"Ya, Ya, you trow out your feet goot. Some day we pay to see you, no? You like to get back already?"

Ardelia performed an audacious step and reached for her olive.

"Ya, danky shun, Dutchy," she said airily, and as the hurdy-gurdy moved away, and the oboe of the Italian band began to run up and down the scale, she sank upon her cool step, stretched her toes and sighed.

"Gee!" she murmured, "N'Yawk's the place!"

COMMENCEMENT AT BILLVILLE.

FRANK L. STANTON.

COMMENCEMENT'S come at Billville—the girls are in the show,
A-smilin' an' beguilin' in a maze o' calico;
An' they're sighin' speechifyin'—got the reins without a check,
An' the boys is still a-standin' on the usual burnin' deck!

An' Mary's got her little lamb—as gentle as a shoat,
An' not a single drum is heard—not even a fun'ral note;
Iser's rollin' rapidly—you almost see it shine,
An' some are born at Bingen—at Bingen on the Rhine!

They're goin' like two-forty—the town can't get to sleep,
For, pilot, 'tis a fearful night, there's danger on the deep;
And curfew shall not ring to-night—they've sworn it, and they know!
Commencement's come at Billville, and the girls are in the show!

COURTING UNDER DIFFICULTIES.

TIME.—A beautiful day in June.
PLACE.—The parlor of an elegant mansion on one of the avenues of Brooklyn.
PERSONS.—Mr. George Sinclair, cashier of the Blank Bank, a tall, handsome young fellow, fashionably attired, and Miss Alice Somerville, the only daughter of a wealthy merchant.

GEORGE had been waiting upon Alice for some time, and he loved her with his whole heart; but, as often happens in such cases, he found much difficulty in saying so. On this beautiful afternoon, however, he had resolved to declare his love and know his fate. So after a few commonplace remarks about the weather, the last party, etc., etc., he took the lady's little hand in his own, and said, "Alice, I love you. I have loved you since I first beheld your face. I have often desired to tell you so, but I have been too diffident. Now, dearest, hear my vow. I love you better than"—

"Fresh whitefish!" shouted a fish-peddler, as he rattled by in his rickety vehicle.

George was naturally very much put out by this sudden interruption, and Alice was obliged to try hard to conceal the smiles which rippled over her face and beamed from her lovely eyes. But our hero was determined to have it out now at all hazards. So he went on. "I love you, Alice, better than my own existence. You alone are the idol of my soul. When I gaze upon your pearly cheek I think of"—

"Soap fat! Soap fat!" roared a stout Irishman with an immense kettle on his head.

George bit his lip, but said: "I think of the pure and glistening snow. Your sweet voice never fails to awaken a responsive chord in my heart; and when I hear you sing that lovely ballad commencing"—

"Umbrellas to mend! Umbrellas to mend!" shouted a lame man, as he gazed up at the open windows.

"When you sing 'Ever of thee I'm fondly dreaming,' it seems as if an angel voice were whispering music to my soul. Oh, darling, say that my affection is reciprocated—I will dress you in"—

"Rags! Rags! Rags!" said a red-headed boy, as he pushed his cart along the middle of the street.

This was too much for the gravity of the young lady, and she laughed long and heartily. George wiped the moisture from his forehead, and continued:

"I meant to say, dear Alice, before that infer— I beg your pardon— I mean that brawling ragman interrupted me, that I would dress you like a queen. Don't refuse me—say you will be my wife."

Alice, who really loved the handsome young fellow, replied, as she twisted her ring: "George, if I were sure that you really meant what you have been telling me, I might be tempted to give my consent."

"Oh, Alice, can you doubt my love? I swear by—"

"Kindlin' wood! Kindlin' wood!" suggested a cross-eyed colored man in a cream-colored coat, as he paused a moment in front of the mansion.

"I swear by all my hopes that I have spoken only that which my heart prompted. Do you not believe me, Alice?"

"Yes, George, I do believe you."

"O, thank you, thank you!" cried the now delighted lover, "and since you have consented, let us talk of the blissful future. I will buy a cottage, and you can have a little garden, and spend your time cultivating the deliciously perfumed"—

"Onions! Onions!" hinted a thin female with a shawl over her head, as she shuffled down the street.

"Confound the pedlers!" exclaimed George. "It seems as if the entire fraternity had resolved to perambulate the streets this afternoon. I meant to say you could tend the flowers while I was absent; for I have quite a sum of money laid aside, and I think of going into business for myself. I shall try"—

"Matches and shoe-laces! Matches and shoe-laces!" said a small boy with a remarkably big voice.

"Alice," said George, in desperation, "do take me out into the hall, cellar, kitchen, woodshed, anywhere but in this room. These pedlers will drive me frantic if I stay here any longer."

As the young lady graciously led the way to the back piazza, George

remarked, "I couldn't tell you half my plans in that room. My mind was all confused, and my language seemed to be all"—

"Soft soap! Soft soap!" declared a shrill voice from without.

George struck his forehead, and said something which the slamming of the door rendered unintelligible. But, once removed from the cause of his difficulty, he succeeded so well with his wooing that when he left the house—some two hours afterward—he did so as the prospective husband of Miss Alice Somerville.

DO, RE, MI, FA, SOL, LA, SI.

A MAJOR loved a maiden so,
His warlike heart was soft as Do.

He oft would kneel to her and say:
"Thou art of life my only Re.

"Ah! if but kinder thou wouldst be,
And sometimes sweetly smile on Mi.

"Thou art my life, my guiding star,
I love thee near, I love thee Fa.

"My passion I cannot control,
Thou art the idol of my Sol."

The maiden said: "Oh, fie! ask pa;
How can you go on thus? Oh, La."

The Major rose from bended knee,
And went her father for to Si.

GIRLS-VS.-BOYS' BOAT RACE.

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES.

THE 10th of June was a delicious summer day. The water was smooth and the crews were in the best possible condition.

The Algonquins wore plain grey flannel suits and white caps. The Atalantas were in dark blue dresses, touched up with red ribbons and wore light straw hats. The little coxswain of the Atalanta was the last to step on board. As she took her place, she carefully deposited at her feet a white handkerchief wrapped about something—perhaps a sponge, in case the boat should take in water.

At last the Algonquin shot out from the little nook where she lay. It was a beautiful sight to see the eight young fellows in their close-fitting suits, their muscular arms bare, bending, recovering, as if they were parts of a single machine.

"The gals can't stan' it agin them fellers," said the old blacksmith from the village.

"You wait till the gals git a-goin'," said the carpenter, who had often worked in the gymnasium of the Corinna Institute. "Ask Jake, there, whether they can't row a mile in double quick time—he knows all about it."

Jake was a freshwater fisherman, an inspector-general of all that went on out-of-doors. Jake delivered himself thus: "Wahl, I don't know jest what to say. I've seed 'em both often enough when they was practicin', an' I tell ye they wa'nt no slouch abaout neither on 'em. But them boats is alfired long, 'n' eight on 'em stretched in a straight line eendways makes a considerable piece aut 'f a mile 'n' a haaf. I'd bate on them gals if it want that them fellers is naterally longer winded, as the gals'll find aut by the time they git raound the stake 'n' over agin the big ellum. I'll go ye a quarter on the pahnts agin the petti-coats."

The Algonquins rowed up and down a few times before the specta-

tors. They appeared in perfect training. The fisherman offered to make his quarter fifty cents. No takers.

Five minutes passed, and all eyes were strained to the south, looking for the Atalanta. Presently the long shell swept into view, with its blooming rowers. How steadily it came on! No rocking, no splashing, no apparent strain; the beat of the strokes as true and regular as the pulse of the healthiest rower among them all. Each of the boats was cheered, but the cheers for the Atalanta were the loudest.

"Take your places!" shouted the umpire. The two boats felt their way to their positions. They got into line, and sat motionless, the bodies of the rowers bent forward, their oars in the water, waiting for the word.

"Go!" shouted the umpire.

Away sprang the Atalanta, and far behind her leaped the Algonquin, the girls having been given a large advantage.

It looked as if it would be impossible for the rear boat to overcome the odds against it. Of course, the Algonquin kept gaining, but could it possibly gain enough? Something like half the distance had been made up in rowing the first three-quarters of a mile. Could the Algonquins do a little better than this in the second half of the race-course they would be sure of winning.

The boats had turned the stake and were coming in rapidly. Every minute the University boat was getting nearer the other.

"Go it, Quins!" shouted the students.

"Pull away, Lantas!" screamed the girls.

Nearer, nearer—the rear boat is pressing the other more and more closely—a few more strokes and they will be even, for there is but one length between them, and thirty rods will carry them to the line. The bow oar of the Algonquin turns his head. He gets a glimpse of the stroke oar of the Atalanta. Her face is like the reddest of June roses, with the passion of expected triumph. The upper button of her close-fitting flannel suit had strangled her as her bosom heaved with exertion, and it has given way before the fierce clutch she made at it. The bow oar was a staunch and steady rower, but he was human. The blade of his oar lingered in the water; a little more and he would have caught a crab.

The boat, which seemed as if it had all the life and nervousness of

a Derby three-year-old, felt the slight check, and all her men bent more vigorously to their oars. The Atalanta saw the movement, and made a spurt to keep their lead and gain upon it if they could. It was no use. The strong arms of the young men were too much for the young maidens; only a few lengths remained to be rowed, and they would certainly pass the Atalanta before she could reach the line.

The little coxswain saw that it was all up if she could not save the day by some strategic device. She stooped, lifted the handkerchief at her feet and took from it a flaming bouquet. "Look!" she cried, and flung it just forward of the track of the Algonquin.

The captain of the University boat turned his head, and there was the lovely vision which had, a moment before, bewitched him. The owner of all that loveliness must, he thought, have flung the bouquet. It was a challenge: how could he be such a coward as to decline accepting it? He was sure he could win the race now, and he would sweep past the line in triumph with a great bunch of flowers at the stern of his boat. He turned the boat's head a little and came up with the floating flowers, near enough to reach them. He stooped and snatched them up, with the loss perhaps of a second. He felt sure of his victory.

The bow of the Algonquin passes the stern of the Atalanta! The bow of the Algonquin is on a level with the middle of the Atalanta—

The Algonquin ranges up alongside of the Atalanta!

"Through with her!" shouts the captain of the Algonquin.

"Now, girls!" shrieks the captain of the Atalanta.

Crack goes the oar of the Atalanta's captain, and up flash its splintered fragments as the stem of her boat springs past the line, eighteen inches at least ahead of the Algonquin.

"Hooraw for the Lantas! Hooraw for the girls," shouted a hundred voices.

MARRIAGE.

A little miss. A little kiss. A little bliss. It's ended.
A little jaw. A little law. And lo, the bands are rended.

WHEN THE FROST IS ON THE PUNKIN.

JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY.

WHEN the frost is on the punkin and the fodder's in the shock,
And you hear the kyouck and gobble of the struttin' turkey cock,
And the clacklin' of the guineys and the cluckin of the hens,
And the rooster's hallylooyer as he tiptoes on the fence;
O, it's then's the times a feller is a-feelin' at his best,
With the risin' sun to greet him from a night of peaceful rest,
As he leaves the house, bareheaded, and goes out to feed the stock,
When the frost is on the punkin and the fodder's in the shock.

They's something kind o'hearty-like about the atmosphere
When the heat of summer's over and the coolin' Fall is here—
Of course, we miss the flowers and the blossoms on the trees,
And the mumble of the hummin' birds an' buzzin' of the bees;
But the air's so appetizin', and the landscape through the haze
Of a crisp and sunny morning of the airly Autumn days
Is a pictur' that no painter has the colorin' to mock—
When the frost is on the punkin and the fodder's in the shock.

The husky, rusty rustle of the tossels of the corn,
And the raspin' of the tangled leaves, as golden as the morn;
The stubble in the furries—kind o'lonesome-like, but still
A-preachin' sermons to us of the barns they growed to fill;
The straw-stack in the medder, and the reaper in the shed;
The hosses in their stalls below—the clover overhead!—
O, it sets my heart a-clickin' like the tickin' of a clock,
When the frost is on the punkin and the fodder's in the shock.

I AIN'T A-GOIN' TO CRY NO MORE.

JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY.

I AIN'T a goin' to cry no more, no more!
I've got ear-ache, an' ma can't make
It quit a-tall,
An' Carlo bite my rubber-ball
An' puncture it; an' Sis she take
An' poke my knife down through the stable-floor
An' loozed it—blame it all!
But I ain't goin' to cry no more, no more!

An' Aunt Mame *wrote* she's comin', an' she *can't,*—
Folks is come *there!*—An' I don't care
She *is* my Aunt!
An' my eyes stings; an' I'm
Ist coughin' all the time,
An' hurts me so, an' where my side's so sore
Grampa felt where, an' he
Says, "Maybe it's *pleurasy!*"
But I ain't goin' to cry no more, no more!

An' I clumbed up an' nen falled off the fence,
An' Herbert he ist laugh at me!
An' my fi'cents
It sticked in my tin bank, an' I ist tore
Purt'-nigh my thumbnail off, a-tryin' to git
It out—nen *smash* it!—An' it's in there yit!
But I ain't goin' to cry no more, no more!

Oo! I'm so wickud!—An' my breath's so hot—
Ist like I run an' don't res' none
But ist run on when I ought to not;
Yes, an' my chin

An' lips 's all warpy, an' teeth's so fast,
An' 's a place in my throat I can't swaller past—
An' they all hurt so!
An' oh, my-oh!
I'm a-startin' ag'in—
I'm a-startin' agin', but I *won't*, fer shore!
I ist ain't goin' to cry no more, no more!

GRADUATION AND TWO YEARS LATER.

On Graduation Day.

OH, for the truly grand ideal
That makes one's life sublime!
Oh, for a quaff of spirit bliss
Beyond all space and time!
Oh, for the boon of a passing glimpse
Of the vast infinities!
'Tis this, and only this, that can
My longing soul appease.

Two Years Later.

Oh, for a safety-pin that's safe!
It would make my life all joy.
Oh, for a food that will not give
The cramps to my little boy!
Oh, for the boon once more of a night
Of solid, square repose!
'Tis this, and only this, I want;
Oh, give me an old-time doze!

WHAT DOROTHY SAYS.

WILL M. MAUPIN.

WHEN first to Dottie I was wed
One morning unto her I said:
"The pies that mother used to make,
And likewise, too, her bread and cake,
Were of the best. Now, strive, my lass,
To get in mother's cooking-class."
She looked me squarely in the eye
And made this innocent reply:
"To cook like her I'll surely try;
But"—and her look was very sly—
"I want a cook-stove nice and bright
Sent up to me this very night—
A stove like father used to buy."

The years are many o'er my head
Since unto Dorothy I said
A word about how mother cooked.
I've not forgot how Dottie looked
The day I first made that bad break
About how mother used to bake.
But let me say, 'twixt you and I,
That more than once with heartfelt sigh
I've seen her unto me draw nigh,
And with a glitter in her eye
Say unto me: "I want a hat,
And yards of this and yards of that;
Just like my father used to buy."

OUTING OF THE SONGS.

ERNEST V. WRIGHT.

"IN the Sweet By-and-By,"
"When the Swallows Homeward Fly,"
And "The Mocking Bird" makes "Music in the Air,"
In the woods near "Home, Sweet Home,"
"In the Gloaming" we will roam
Till "McSorley's Twins" have climbed the "Golden Stair."

"Annie Rooney," "Old Black Joe,"
And "Uncle Ned," with us will go
After "Dancing on the Barn" till bats do fly;
Then on "Paddy Duffy's Cart,"
For the wood-lands we will start,
But choose partners while we're "Comin' Thro' the Rye."

"When the Robins Nest Again"
We will leave the quiet glen,
And a moment "In the Starlight," we will stay;
Then we'll slowly wander down
To the "Tavern in the Town,"
And "Tramp, Tramp, Tramp," to bed we'll file away.

VICTOR OF MARENGO.

NAPOLEON was sitting in his tent; before him lay a map of Italy. He took four pins and stuck them up; measured, moved the pins, and measured again. "Now," said he, "that is right; I will capture him there!"

"Who, sir?" said an officer.

"Milas, the old fox of Austria. I shall cross the Po, meet him on the plains of Laconia, and conquer him there," and the finger of the "Child of Destiny" pointed to Marengo.

But God thwarted Napoleon's scheme, and the well-planned victory of Napoleon became a terrible defeat.

Just as the day was lost, Desaix, sweeping across the field at the head of his cavalry, halted on the eminence where stood Napoleon. There was in the corps a drummer-boy, a gamin whom Desaix had picked up in the streets of Paris. He had followed the victorious eagle of France in the campaigns of Egypt and Austria.

As the columns halted, Napoleon shouted to him: "Beat a retreat!"

The boy did not stir.

"Gamin, beat a retreat!"

The boy stopped, grasped his drumsticks, and said: "Sir, I do not know how to beat a retreat; Desaix never taught me that; but I can beat a charge,—oh! I can beat a charge that will make the dead fall into line. I beat that charge at the Pyramids; I beat that charge at Mount Tabor; I beat it again at the bridge of Lodi. May I beat it here?"

Napoleon turned to Desaix, and said: "We are beaten; what shall we do?"

"Do? Beat them! It is only three o'clock, and there is time enough to win a victory yet. Up! the charge! beat the old charge of Mount Tabor and Lodi!"

A moment later the corps, following the sword-gleam of Desaix, and keeping step with the furious roll of the gamin's drum, swept down on the host of Austrians. They drove the first line back on the

second—both on the third, and there they died. Desaix fell at the first volley, but the line never faltered, and as the smoke cleared away, the gamin was seen in front of his line marching right on, and still beating the furious charge. Over the dead and wounded, over breastworks and fallen foe, over cannon belching forth their fire of death, he led the way to victory.

To-day men point to Marengo in wonder. They admire the power and foresight that so skilfully handled the battle, but they forget that a general only thirty years of age made a victory of a defeat. They forget that a gamin of Paris put to shame the "Child of Destiny."

IDEAL AND REAL.

HE was a reader of Shakespeare,
And longing a poet to be;
She was a student at college,
In quest of an M.D. degree.
They stood in the pale, silent moonlight,
He holding her soft, dimpled hand;
A happier lover than he was,
Sure never lived in the land.
For she had just told him, the darling,
A secret he'd long sighed to know—
Ah, lady, you'll guess what the thing was—
That is, if you e'er had a beau.
"My loved one," he murmured, in rapture,
With a touch of dramatic art,
"Are you sure that these words you have uttered
Come straight from your warm, tender heart?"
She answered—her full tones were sweeter
Than crescendoes from nightingales' tongues—
"Ha! ha! From my heart? How absurd, dear!
The voice always comes from the lungs."

WHEN KATE HAS DONE MY ROOM.

OH, Kate, the maid who regulates
The domicile wherein I dwell,
Goes twice to church on Sabbath day,
And otherwise comports her well,
Within her heart, as I opine,
A thousand carried virtues bloom;
But in my heart what weight of woe,
When Kate has done my room!

The picture of my latest girl
Lies in the basket kept for waste;
One shoe is hid beneath the bed,
Its mate behind the trunk is placed.
Old refuse papers all are saved,
Those yet unread have met their doom;
And everything is upside down
When Kate has done my room.

My shoebrush's on the mantelpiece,
My toothbrush nestles on the floor,
The whiskbroom and my button-hook
Are out of sight forevermore;
And nothing's where it used to be,
Save in my heart eternal gloom;
And life becomes a thing of pain,
When Kate has done my room